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Why Our Founding Fathers Risked It All

Have you ever stopped to think about the incredible risks the Founding Fathers took when they rebelled against British authority? They were starting a war with the greatest military power of the time even though they did not have a mighty fighting force themselves. And they were fighting for a type of government that most people thought was impossible. In this video, Professor Sarah Burns of the Rochester Institute of Technology explains the historical and philosophical context of the American Revolution from the changing role of the British army in the colonies to Radical Whig theory.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/4wphUAtDGko>

"America's Founding, Ep. 1: Why Our Founding Fathers Risked It All" by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description

Have you ever stopped to think about the incredible risks the Founding Fathers took when they rebelled against British authority? They were starting a war with the greatest military power of the time even though they did not have a mighty fighting force themselves. And they were fighting for a type of government that most people thought was impossible. In this video, Professor Sarah Burns of the Rochester Institute of Technology explains the historical and philosophical context of the American Revolution from the changing role of the British army in the colonies to Radical Whig theory.

Exercise:

Problem:

Why did some think it would be hard to create a democracy in the colonies?

- a. The cultures were too different.
- b. The country was too large.
- c. The colonies despised each other.

d. Democracy was never tried before.

Solution:

b. The country was too large.

The Colonists vs. The British Soldiers

In the decade before the American Revolution, British soldiers had started to act more like an occupying force than a source of security. In this video, Professor Sarah Burns of the Rochester Institute of Technology explains why this happened, and how increasing tensions between colonists and soldiers pushed the colonists closer to declaring independence.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/0SXPAMfXuUU>

"America's Founding, Ep. 2: The Colonists vs. The British Soldiers" by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description

In the decade before the American Revolution, British soldiers had started to act more like an occupying force than a source of security. In this video, Professor Sarah Burns of the Rochester Institute of Technology explains why this happened, and how increasing tensions between colonists and soldiers pushed the colonists closer to declaring independence.

Exercise:

Problem:

How did the role of the British military change in the colonies in the years before the Revolutionary War?

- a. The British fought more and more wars in the colonies.
- b. The military played a larger role in enforcing laws.
- c. The military began to turn against British rule.
- d. The British began drafting colonists.

Solution:

- b. The military played a larger role in enforcing laws.

Taxes & Abuse of Power

One major grievance the colonists had against England is the one most people remember learning about in school: taxes. But the concern that radicalized the colonists was less about taxes per se, and more about power. In this video, Professor Sarah Burns of the Rochester Institute of Technology explains why the series of new, unprecedented taxes passed by Parliament in the decades before the revolution were perceived as a pattern of steady encroachment on the colonists' freedom.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/7tB7GLCQgbg>

"America's Founding, Ep. 3: Taxes & Abuse of Power" by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description

One major grievance the colonists had against England is the one most people remember learning about in school: taxes. But the concern that radicalized the colonists was less about taxes per se, and more about power. In this video, Professor Sarah Burns of the Rochester Institute of Technology explains why the series of new, unprecedented taxes passed by Parliament in the decades before the revolution were perceived as a pattern of steady encroachment on the colonists' freedom.

Exercise:

Problem: The Boston Tea Party was in response to

- a. the Boston Massacre.
- b. the Stamp Act of 1765.
- c. the Tea Act of 1773.
- d. the French-Indian War.

Solution:

- c. the Tea Act of 1773.

Radical Whig Theory and the Ideas Behind the Revolution

What was it that pushed the Founding Fathers to fight back against the oppressive actions of the British and declare independence? In this video, Professor Sarah Burns of the Rochester Institute of Technology explains Radical Whig Theory, a political movement that began in England years earlier, and how it convinced many colonists that it was their moral duty to fight back against oppressive rule.

https://www.youtube.com/embed/yYEUPWS_JrM

"America's Founding, Ep. 4: The Ideas Behind A Revolution" by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description

What was it that pushed the Founding Fathers to fight back against the oppressive actions of the British and declare independence? Professor Sarah Burns of the Rochester Institute of Technology explains Radical Whig Theory, a political movement that began in England years earlier, and how it convinced many colonists that it was their moral duty to fight back against oppressive rule.

Exercise:

Problem: Appeals to jealously guard liberty is a feature of

- a. classical liberalism.
- b. mercantilism.
- c. neoliberalism.
- d. radical whig theory.

Solution:

- d. radical whig theory.

John Locke and the Right to Revolution

In 1776, the Founding Fathers wrote the Declaration of Independence and asserted that as a free people they had the right to overthrow an unjust ruler - a shocking idea at the time. But where did they get this radical idea? In this video, Professor Sarah Burns of the Rochester Institute of Technology explains how philosopher John Locke influenced the Founding Fathers.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/cLDGiusk2m8>

"America's Founding, Ep. 5: Is There a Right to Revolution?" by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description

In 1776, the Founding Fathers wrote the Declaration of Independence and asserted that as a free people they had the right to overthrow an unjust ruler - a shocking idea at the time. But where did they get this radical idea? Professor Sarah Burns of the Rochester Institute of Technology explains how philosopher John Locke influenced the Founding Fathers.

Exercise:

Problem: What did the Declaration of Independence NOT assert?

- a. The misuse of Naval power
- b. The abuses of the British crown
- c. The right to secede
- d. The new form of government in the colonies

Solution:

- d. The new form of government in the colonies

Creating a Country

It is 1776 and the Founding Fathers have just committed treason by declaring independence from Britain. They don't have a large military force, aren't set up to fight a multi front war, and are trying to create new institutions based on radical ideas created by philosophers. In this video, Professor Sarah Burns of the Rochester Institute of Technology explains the incredible risks the Founding Fathers took to assert their freedom and encourages us to think through what it means to live in a free society and what we expect from our government.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/KhB5VpId99I>

"America's Founding, Ep. 6: Creating a Country" by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description

It is 1776 and the Founding Fathers have just committed treason by declaring independence from Britain. They don't have a large military force, aren't set up to fight a multi-front war, and are trying to create new institutions based on radical ideas created by philosophers. In this video, Professor Sarah Burns of the Rochester Institute of Technology explains the incredible risks the Founding Fathers took to assert their freedom and encourages us to think through what it means to live in a free society and what we expect from our government.

Exercise:

Problem:

Which philosophy did the Founding Fathers rely on in establishing consent for the government by the people?

- a. Radical Whig theory
- b. Lockean liberalism
- c. Divine rights
- d. Direct consent

Solution:

- a. Radical Whig theory

Part 1

Professor Brad Birzer of Hillsdale College discusses how the ancient world, liberalism, and Protestantism influenced the American Founding.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/z8sU1SImX9s>

"Liberty, Rights and the American Founding, Part 1" by the Foundation for Economic Education

Description

Professor Brad Birzer of Hillsdale College discusses how the ancient world, liberalism, and Protestantism influenced the American Founding.

Part 2

Professor Brad Birzer of Hillsdale College discusses how the ancient world, liberalism, and Protestantism influenced the American Founding.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/-jz2pmncybI>

"Liberty, Rights and the American Founding, Part 2" by the Foundation for Economic Education

Description

Professor Brad Birzer of Hillsdale College discusses how the ancient world, liberalism, and Protestantism influenced the American Founding.

Part 3

Professor Brad Birzer of Hillsdale College discusses how the ancient world, liberalism, and Protestantism influenced the American Founding.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/kGPxRx-DsYM>

"Liberty, Rights and the American Founding, Part 3" by the Foundation for Economic Education

Description

Professor Brad Birzer of Hillsdale College discusses how the ancient world, liberalism, and Protestantism influenced the American Founding.

Part 4

Professor Brad Birzer of Hillsdale College discusses how the ancient world, liberalism, and Protestantism influenced the American Founding.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/StsRx8LvZr8>

"Liberty, Rights and the American Founding, Part 4" by the Foundation for Economic Education

Description

Professor Brad Birzer of Hillsdale College discusses how the ancient world, liberalism, and Protestantism influenced the American Founding.

Part 5

Professor Brad Birzer of Hillsdale College discusses how the ancient world, liberalism, and Protestantism influenced the American Founding.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/TaBuiGX8gN4>

"Liberty, Rights and the American Founding, Part 5" by the Foundation for Economic Education

Description

Professor Brad Birzer of Hillsdale College discusses how the ancient world, liberalism, and Protestantism influenced the American Founding.

Part 6

Professor Brad Birzer of Hillsdale College discusses how the ancient world, liberalism, and Protestantism influenced the American Founding.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/HuQUWtDCu-E>

"Liberty, Rights and the American Founding,
Part 6" by the Foundation for Economic
Education

Description

Professor Brad Birzer of Hillsdale College discusses how the ancient world, liberalism, and Protestantism influenced the American Founding.

Part 7

Professor Brad Birzer of Hillsdale College discusses how the ancient world, liberalism, and Protestantism influenced the American Founding.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/ZEGLIWRDFw0>

"Liberty, Rights and the American Founding,
Part 7" by the Foundation for Economic
Education

Description

Professor Brad Birzer of Hillsdale College discusses how the ancient world, liberalism, and Protestantism influenced the American Founding.

Part 8

Professor Brad Birzer of Hillsdale College discusses how the ancient world, liberalism, and Protestantism influenced the American Founding.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/b3bAlBgQV1Q>

"Liberty, Rights and the American Founding, Part 8" by the Foundation for Economic Education

Description

Professor Brad Birzer of Hillsdale College discusses how the ancient world, liberalism, and Protestantism influenced the American Founding.

Part 9

Professor Brad Birzer of Hillsdale College discusses how the ancient world, liberalism, and Protestantism influenced the American Founding.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/yxYm0Nkt39w>

"Liberty, Rights and the American Founding, Part 9" by the Foundation for Economic Education

Description

Professor Brad Birzer of Hillsdale College discusses how the ancient world, liberalism, and Protestantism influenced the American Founding.

The American Founding in Practice: Ideals vs. Reality

The United States was founded on the principles of natural rights, equality, and classical republicanism, but how well did it actually live up to these ideals? In this lecture, Professor Rob McDonald of the US Military Academy at West Point describes the conflict between the ideals of the American Revolution and the unfortunate realities of the time.

https://www.youtube.com/embed/bX9VjU_yqYM

"The American Founding in Practice, Rob McDonald" by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description

The United States was founded on the principles of natural rights, equality, and classical republicanism, but how well did it actually live up to these ideals? In this lecture, Professor Rob McDonald of the US Military Academy at West Point describes the conflict between the ideals of the American Revolution and the unfortunate realities of the time.

Watch on Youtube

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bX9VjU_yqYM

The Meaning of Liberty During the American Founding

Dr. Bradley Birzer discusses natural rights and individual liberty in Founding Father John Dickinson's "Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania".
<https://www.youtube.com/embed/VNigTETaSl4>

"The Meaning of Liberty During the American Founding" by the Foundation for Economic Education

Description

Dr. Bradley Birzer discusses natural rights and individual liberty in Founding Father John Dickinson's *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*.

Additional Reading

- *Empire and Nation: Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania* (John Dickinson). *Letters from the Federal Farmer* (Richard Henry Lee) edited by Forrest McDonald: Two series of letters that have been described as “the wellsprings of nearly all ensuing debate on the limits of governmental power in the United States” are collected in this volume. The writings include *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania* - the “farmer” being the gifted and courageous statesman John Dickinson and *Letters from the Federal Farmer* by the redoubtable Richard Henry Lee of Virginia. Together, Dickinson and Lee addressed the whole remarkable range of issues provoked by the crisis of British policies in North America, a crisis from which a new nation emerged from an overreaching empire.

Common Sense by Thomas Paine

Thomas Paine's 1776 pamphlet calling for American independence from Great Britain.

Introduction

Perhaps the sentiments contained in the following pages, are not YET sufficiently fashionable to procure them general favour; a long habit of not thinking a thing WRONG, gives it a superficial appearance of being RIGHT, and raises at first a formidable outcry in defense of custom. But the tumult soon subsides. Time makes more converts than reason. As a long and violent abuse of power, is generally the Means of calling the right of it in question (and in Matters too which might never have been thought of, had not the Sufferers been aggravated into the inquiry) and as the King of England hath undertaken in his OWN RIGHT, to support the Parliament in what he calls THEIRS, and as the good people of this country are grievously oppressed by the combination, they have an undoubted privilege to inquire into the pretensions of both, and equally to reject the usurpation of either. In the following sheets, the author hath studiously avoided every thing which is personal among ourselves. Compliments as well as censure to individuals make no part thereof. The wise, and the worthy, need not the triumph of a pamphlet; and those whose sentiments are injudicious, or unfriendly, will cease of themselves unless too much pains are bestowed upon their conversion. The cause of America is in a great measure the cause of all mankind. Many circumstances hath, and will arise, which are not local, but universal, and through which the principles of all Lovers of Mankind are affected, and in the Event of which, their Affections are interested. The laying a Country desolate with Fire and Sword, declaring War against the natural rights of all Mankind, and extirpating the Defenders thereof from the Face of the Earth, is the Concern of every Man to whom Nature hath given the Power of feeling; of which Class, regardless of Party Censure, is the AUTHOR.

P. S. The Publication of this new Edition hath been delayed, with a View of taking notice (had it been necessary) of any Attempt to refute the Doctrine of Independence: As no Answer hath yet appeared, it is now presumed that none will, the Time needful for getting such a Performance ready for the

Public being considerably past. Who the Author of this Production is, is wholly unnecessary to the Public, as the Object for Attention is the DOCTRINE ITSELF, not the MAN. Yet it may not be unnecessary to say, That he is unconnected with any Party, and under no sort of Influence public or private, but the influence of reason and principle.

Philadelphia, February 14, 1776

Of the Origin and Design of Government in General, with Concise Remarks on the English Constitution

SOME writers have so confounded society with government, as to leave little or no distinction between them; whereas they are not only different, but have different origins. Society is produced by our wants, and government by our wickedness; the former promotes our happiness POSITIVELY by uniting our affections, the latter NEGATIVELY by restraining our vices. The one encourages intercourse, the other creates distinctions. The first is a patron, the last a punisher.

Society in every state is a blessing, but Government, even in its best state, is but a necessary evil; in its worst state an intolerable one: for when we suffer, or are exposed to the same miseries BY A GOVERNMENT, which we might expect in a country WITHOUT GOVERNMENT, our calamity is heightened by reflecting that we furnish the means by which we suffer.

Government, like dress, is the badge of lost innocence; the palaces of kings are built upon the ruins of the bowers of paradise. For were the impulses of conscience clear, uniform and irresistibly obeyed, man would need no other lawgiver; but that not being the case, he finds it necessary to surrender up a part of his property to furnish means for the protection of the rest; and this he is induced to do by the same prudence which in every other case advises him, out of two evils to choose the least. Wherefore, security being the true design and end of government, it unanswerably follows that whatever form thereof appears most likely to ensure it to us, with the least expense and greatest benefit, is preferable to all others.

In order to gain a clear and just idea of the design and end of government, let us suppose a small number of persons settled in some sequestered part of the earth, unconnected with the rest; they will then represent the first peopling of any country, or of the world. In this state of natural liberty, society will be their first thought. A thousand motives will excite them thereto; the strength of one man is so unequal to his wants, and his mind so unfitted for perpetual solitude, that he is soon obliged to seek assistance and relief of another, who in his turn requires the same. Four or five united would be able to raise a tolerable dwelling in the midst of a wilderness, but one man might labour out the common period of life without accomplishing any thing; when he had felled his timber he could not remove it, nor erect it after it was removed; hunger in the mean time would urge him to quit his work, and every different want would call him a different way. Disease, nay even misfortune, would be death; for, though neither might be mortal, yet either would disable him from living, and reduce him to a state in which he might rather be said to perish than to die.

Thus necessity, like a gravitating power, would soon form our newly arrived emigrants into society, the reciprocal blessings of which would supersede, and render the obligations of law and government unnecessary while they remained perfectly just to each other; but as nothing but Heaven is impregnable to vice, it will unavoidably happen that in proportion as they surmount the first difficulties of emigration, which bound them together in a common cause, they will begin to relax in their duty and attachment to each other: and this remissness will point out the necessity of establishing some form of government to supply the defect of moral virtue.

Some convenient tree will afford them a State House, under the branches of which the whole Colony may assemble to deliberate on public matters. It is more than probable that their first laws will have the title only of Regulations and be enforced by no other penalty than public disesteem. In this first parliament every man by natural right will have a seat.

But as the Colony encreases, the public concerns will encrease likewise, and the distance at which the members may be separated, will render it too inconvenient for all of them to meet on every occasion as at first, when their number was small, their habitations near, and the public concerns few and

trifling. This will point out the convenience of their consenting to leave the legislative part to be managed by a select number chosen from the whole body, who are supposed to have the same concerns at stake which those have who appointed them, and who will act in the same manner as the whole body would act were they present. If the colony continue encreasing, it will become necessary to augment the number of representatives, and that the interest of every part of the colony may be attended to, it will be found best to divide the whole into convenient parts, each part sending its proper number: and that the ELECTED might never form to themselves an interest separate from the ELECTORS, prudence will point out the propriety of having elections often: because as the ELECTED might by that means return and mix again with the general body of the ELECTORS in a few months, their fidelity to the public will be secured by the prudent reflection of not making a rod for themselves. And as this frequent interchange will establish a common interest with every part of the community, they will mutually and naturally support each other, and on this, (not on the unmeaning name of king,) depends the STRENGTH OF GOVERNMENT, AND THE HAPPINESS OF THE GOVERNED.

Here then is the origin and rise of government; namely, a mode rendered necessary by the inability of moral virtue to govern the world; here too is the design and end of government, viz. Freedom and security. And however our eyes may be dazzled with show, or our ears deceived by sound; however prejudice may warp our wills, or interest darken our understanding, the simple voice of nature and reason will say, 'tis right.

I draw my idea of the form of government from a principle in nature which no art can overturn, viz. that the more simple any thing is, the less liable it is to be disordered, and the easier repaired when disordered; and with this maxim in view I offer a few remarks on the so much boasted constitution of England. That it was noble for the dark and slavish times in which it was erected, is granted. When the world was overrun with tyranny the least remove therefrom was a glorious rescue. But that it is imperfect, subject to convulsions, and incapable of producing what it seems to promise is easily demonstrated.

Absolute governments, (tho' the disgrace of human nature) have this advantage with them, they are simple; if the people suffer, they know the head from which their suffering springs; know likewise the remedy; and are not bewildered by a variety of causes and cures. But the constitution of England is so exceedingly complex, that the nation may suffer for years together without being able to discover in which part the fault lies; some will say in one and some in another, and every political physician will advise a different medicine.

I know it is difficult to get over local or long standing prejudices, yet if we will suffer ourselves to examine the component parts of the English Constitution, we shall find them to be the base remains of two ancient tyrannies, compounded with some new Republican materials.

First. — The remains of Monarchical tyranny in the person of the King.

Secondly. — That the Commons, by being appointed for that purpose, are either wiser or more worthy of confidence than the Crown.

But as the same constitution which gives the Commons a power to check the King by withholding the supplies, gives afterwards the King a power to check the Commons, by empowering him to reject their other bills; it again supposes that the King is wiser than those whom it has already supposed to be wiser than him. A mere absurdity!

There is something exceedingly ridiculous in the composition of Monarchy; it first excludes a man from the means of information, yet empowers him to act in cases where the highest judgment is required. The state of a king shuts him from the World, yet the business of a king requires him to know it thoroughly; wherefore the different parts, by unnaturally opposing and destroying each other, prove the whole character to be absurd and useless.

Some writers have explained the English constitution thus: the King, say they, is one, the people another; the Peers are a house in behalf of the King, the commons in behalf of the people; but this hath all the distinctions of a house divided against itself; and though the expressions be pleasantly arranged, yet when examined they appear idle and ambiguous; and it will always happen, that the nicest construction that words are capable of, when

applied to the description of something which either cannot exist, or is too incomprehensible to be within the compass of description, will be words of sound only, and though they may amuse the ear, they cannot inform the mind: for this explanation includes a previous question, viz. HOW CAME THE KING BY A POWER WHICH THE PEOPLE ARE AFRAID TO TRUST, AND ALWAYS OBLIGED TO CHECK? Such a power could not be the gift of a wise people, neither can any power, WHICH NEEDS CHECKING, be from God; yet the provision which the constitution makes supposes such a power to exist.

But the provision is unequal to the task; the means either cannot or will not accomplish the end, and the whole affair is a Felo de se: for as the greater weight will always carry up the less, and as all the wheels of a machine are put in motion by one, it only remains to know which power in the constitution has the most weight, for that will govern: and tho' the others, or a part of them, may clog, or, as the phrase is, check the rapidity of its motion, yet so long as they cannot stop it, their endeavours will be ineffectual: The first moving power will at last have its way, and what it wants in speed is supplied by time.

That the crown is this overbearing part in the English constitution needs not be mentioned, and that it derives its whole consequence merely from being the giver of places and pensions is self-evident; wherefore, though we have been wise enough to shut and lock a door against absolute Monarchy, we at the same time have been foolish enough to put the Crown in possession of the key.

The prejudice of Englishmen, in favour of their own government, by King, Lords and Commons, arises as much or more from national pride than reason. Individuals are undoubtedly safer in England than in some other countries: but the will of the king is as much the law of the land in Britain as in France, with this difference, that instead of proceeding directly from his mouth, it is handed to the people under the formidable shape of an act of parliament. For the fate of Charles the First hath only made kings more subtle — not more just.

Wherefore, laying aside all national pride and prejudice in favour of modes and forms, the plain truth is that IT IS WHOLLY OWING TO THE

CONSTITUTION OF THE PEOPLE, AND NOT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE GOVERNMENT that the crown is not as oppressive in England as in Turkey.

An inquiry into the CONSTITUTIONAL ERRORS in the English form of government, is at this time highly necessary; for as we are never in a proper condition of doing justice to others, while we continue under the influence of some leading partiality, so neither are we capable of doing it to ourselves while we remain fettered by any obstinate prejudice. And as a man who is attached to a prostitute is unfitted to choose or judge of a wife, so any prepossession in favour of a rotten constitution of government will disable us from discerning a good one.

Of Monarchy and Hereditary Succession

MANKIND being originally equals in the order of creation, the equality could only be destroyed by some subsequent circumstance: the distinctions of rich and poor may in a great measure be accounted for, and that without having recourse to the harsh ill-sounding names of oppression and avarice. Oppression is often the CONSEQUENCE, but seldom or never the MEANS of riches; and tho' avarice will preserve a man from being necessitously poor, it generally makes him too timorous to be wealthy.

But there is another and great distinction for which no truly natural or religious reason can be assigned, and that is the distinction of men into KINGS and SUBJECTS. Male and female are the distinctions of nature, good and bad the distinctions of Heaven; but how a race of men came into the world so exalted above the rest, and distinguished like some new species, is worth inquiring into, and whether they are the means of happiness or of misery to mankind.

In the early ages of the world, according to the scripture chronology there were no kings; the consequence of which was, there were no wars; it is the pride of kings which throws mankind into confusion. Holland, without a king hath enjoyed more peace for this last century than any of the monarchical governments in Europe. Antiquity favours the same remark;

for the quiet and rural lives of the first Patriarchs have a snappy something in them, which vanishes when we come to the history of Jewish royalty.

Government by kings was first introduced into the world by the Heathens, from whom the children of Israel copied the custom. It was the most prosperous invention the Devil ever set on foot for the promotion of idolatry. The Heathens paid divine honours to their deceased kings, and the Christian World hath improved on the plan by doing the same to their living ones. How impious is the title of sacred Majesty applied to a worm, who in the midst of his splendor is crumbling into dust!

As the exalting one man so greatly above the rest cannot be justified on the equal rights of nature, so neither can it be defended on the authority of scripture; for the will of the Almighty as declared by Gideon, and the prophet Samuel, expressly disapproves of government by Kings.

All anti-monarchical parts of scripture have been very smoothly glossed over in monarchical governments, but they undoubtedly merit the attention of countries which have their governments yet to form. "Render unto Cesar the things which are Cesar's" is the scripture doctrine of courts, yet it is no support of monarchical government, for the Jews at that time were without a king, and in a state of vassalage to the Romans.

Near three thousand years passed away, from the Mosaic account of the creation, till the Jews under a national delusion requested a king. Till then their form of government (except in extraordinary cases where the Almighty interposed) was a kind of Republic, administered by a judge and the elders of the tribes. Kings they had none, and it was held sinful to acknowledge any being under that title but the Lord of Hosts. And when a man seriously reflects on the idolatrous homage which is paid to the persons of kings, he need not wonder that the Almighty, ever jealous of his honour, should disapprove a form of government which so impiously invades the prerogative of Heaven.

Monarchy is ranked in scripture as one of the sins of the Jews, for which a curse in reserve is denounced against them. The history of that transaction is worth attending to.

The children of Israel being oppressed by the Midianites, Gideon marched against them with a small army, and victory thro' the divine interposition decided in his favour. The Jews, elate with success, and attributing it to the generalship of Gideon, proposed making him a king, saying, "Rule thou over us, thou and thy son, and thy son's son." Here was temptation in its fullest extent; not a kingdom only, but an hereditary one; but Gideon in the piety of his soul replied, "I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you. **THE LORD SHALL RULE OVER YOU.**" Words need not be more explicit: Gideon doth not decline the honour, but denieth their right to give it; neither doth he compliment them with invented declarations of his thanks, but in the positive style of a prophet charges them with disaffection to their proper Sovereign, the King of Heaven.

About one hundred and thirty years after this, they fell again into the same error. The hankering which the Jews had for the idolatrous customs of the Heathens, is something exceedingly unaccountable; but so it was, that laying hold of the misconduct of Samuel's two sons, who were intrusted with some secular concerns, they came in an abrupt and clamorous manner to Samuel, saying, "Behold thou art old, and they sons walk not in thy ways, now make us a king to judge us like all the other nations." And here we cannot observe but that their motives were bad, viz. that they might be **LIKE** unto other nations, i. e. the Heathens, whereas their true glory lay in being as much **UNLIKE** them as possible. "But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, give us a King to judge us; and Samuel prayed unto the Lord, and the Lord said unto Samuel, hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee, for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, **THAT I SHOULD NOT REIGN OVER THEM.** According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other Gods: so do they also unto thee. Now therefore hearken unto their voice, howbeit, protest solemnly unto them and show them the manner of the King that shall reign over them," i.e. not of any particular King, but the general manner of the Kings of the earth whom Israel was so eagerly copying after. And notwithstanding the great distance of time and difference of manners, the character is still in fashion. "And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people, that asked of him a King. And he said, This shall be the manner of the King that shall reign over you. He will take your

sons and appoint them for himself for his chariots and to be his horsemen, and some shall run before his chariots" (this description agrees with the present mode of impressing men) "and he will appoint him captains over thousands and captains over fifties, will set them to clear his ground and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots, And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers" (this describes the expense and luxury as well as the oppression of Kings) "and he will take your fields and your vineyards, and your olive yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give them to his officers and to his servants" (by which we see that bribery, corruption, and favouritism, are the standing vices of Kings) "and he will take the tenth of your men servants, and your maid servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work: and he will take the tenth of your sheep, and ye shall be his servants, and ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shell have chosen, **AND THE LORD WILL NOT HEAR YOU IN THAT DAY.**"

This accounts for the continuation of Monarchy; neither do the characters of the few good kings which have lived since, either sanctify the title, or blot out the sinfulness of the origin; the high encomium of David takes no notice of him **OFFICIALLY AS A KING**, but only as a **MAN** after God's own heart. "Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel, and they said, Nay, but we will have a king over us, that we may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us, and go out before us and fight our battles." Samuel continued to reason with them but to no purpose; he set before them their ingratitude, but all would not avail; and seeing them fully bent on their folly, he cried out, "I will call unto the Lord, and he shall send thunder and rain" (which was then a punishment, being in the time of wheat harvest) "that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great which ye have done in the sight of the Lord, **IN ASKING YOU A KING.** So Samuel called unto the Lord, and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day, and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel. And all the people said unto Samuel, **Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God that we die not, for WE HAVE ADDED UNTO OUR SINS THIS EVIL, TO ASK A KING.**" These portions of scripture are direct and positive. They admit of no equivocal construction. That the Almighty hath here entered his protest

against monarchical government is true, or the scripture is false. And a man hath good reason to believe that there is as much of kingcraft as priestcraft in withholding the scripture from the public in popish countries. For monarchy in every instance is the popery of government.

To the evil of monarchy we have added that of hereditary succession; and as the first is a degradation and lessening of ourselves, so the second, claimed as a matter of right, is an insult and imposition on posterity. For all men being originally equals, no one by birth could have a right to set up his own family in perpetual preference to all others for ever, and tho' himself might deserve some decent degree of honours of his contemporaries, yet his descendants might be far too unworthy to inherit them. One of the strongest natural proofs of the folly of hereditary right in Kings, is that nature disapproves it, otherwise she would not so frequently turn it into ridicule, by giving mankind an ASS FOR A LION.

Secondly, as no man at first could possess any other public honors than were bestowed upon him, so the givers of those honors could have no power to give away the right of posterity, and though they might say "We choose you for our head," they could not without manifest injustice to their children say "that your children and your children's children shall reign over ours forever." Because such an unwise, unjust, unnatural compact might (perhaps) in the next succession put them under the government of a rogue or a fool. Most wise men in their private sentiments have ever treated hereditary right with contempt; yet it is one of those evils which when once established is not easily removed: many submit from fear, others from superstition, and the more powerful part shares with the king the plunder of the rest.

This is supposing the present race of kings in the world to have had an honorable origin: whereas it is more than probable, that, could we take off the dark covering of antiquity and trace them to their first rise, we should find the first of them nothing better than the principal ruffian of some restless gang, whose savage manners of pre-eminence in subtilty obtained him the title of chief among plunderers; and who by increasing in power and extending his depredations, overawed the quiet and defenseless to purchase their safety by frequent contributions. Yet his electors could have

no idea of giving hereditary right to his descendants, because such a perpetual exclusion of themselves was incompatible with the free and restrained principles they professed to live by. Wherefore, hereditary succession in the early ages of monarchy could not take place as a matter of claim, but as something casual or complementary; but as few or no records were extant in those days, the traditionary history stuff'd with fables, it was very easy, after the lapse of a few generations, to trump up some superstitious tale conveniently timed, Mahomet-like, to cram hereditary right down the throats of the vulgar. Perhaps the disorders which threatened, or seemed to threaten, on the decease of a leader and the choice of a new one (for elections among ruffians could not be very orderly) induced many at first to favour hereditary pretensions; by which means it happened, as it hath happened since, that what at first was submitted to as a convenience was afterwards claimed as a right.

England since the conquest hath known some few good monarchs, but groaned beneath a much larger number of bad ones: yet no man in his senses can say that their claim under William the Conqueror is a very honourable one. A French bastard landing with an armed Banditti and establishing himself king of England against the consent of the natives, is in plain terms a very paltry rascally original. It certainly hath no divinity in it. However it is needless to spend much time in exposing the folly of hereditary right; if there are any so weak as to believe it, let them promiscuously worship the Ass and the Lion, and welcome. I shall neither copy their humility, nor disturb their devotion.

Yet I should be glad to ask how they suppose kings came at first? The question admits but of three answers, viz. either by lot, by election, or by usurpation. If the first king was taken by lot, it establishes a precedent for the next, which excludes hereditary succession. Saul was by lot, yet the succession was not hereditary, neither does it appear from that transaction that there was any intention it ever should. If the first king of any country was by election, that likewise establishes a precedent for the next; for to say, that the right of all future generations is taken away, by the act of the first electors, in their choice not only of a king but of a family of kings for ever, hath no parallel in or out of scripture but the doctrine of original sin, which supposes the free will of all men lost in Adam; and from such

comparison, and it will admit of no other, hereditary succession can derive no glory. for as in Adam all sinned, and as in the first electors all men obeyed; as in the one all mankind were subjected to Satan, and in the other to sovereignty; as our innocence was lost in the first, and our authority in the last; and as both disable us from re-assuming some former state and privilege, it unanswerably follows that original sin and hereditary succession are parallels. Dishonourable rank! inglorious connection! yet the most subtle sophist cannot produce a juster simile.

As to usurpation, no man will be so hardy as to defend it; and that William the Conqueror was an usurper is a fact not to be contradicted. The plain truth is, that the antiquity of English monarchy will not bear looking into.

But it is not so much the absurdity as the evil of hereditary succession which concerns mankind. Did it ensure a race of good and wise men it would have the seal of divine authority, but as it opens a door to the FOOLISH, the WICKED, and the IMPROPER, it hath in it the nature of oppression. Men who look upon themselves born to reign, and others to obey, soon grow insolent. Selected from the rest of mankind, their minds are early poisoned by importance; and the world they act in differs so materially from the world at large, that they have but little opportunity of knowing its true interests, and when they succeed in the government are frequently the most ignorant and unfit of any throughout the dominions.

Another evil which attends hereditary succession is, that the throne is subject to be possessed by a minor at any age; all which time the regency acting under the cover of a king have every opportunity and inducement to betray their trust. The same national misfortune happens when a king worn out with age and infirmity enters the last stage of human weakness. In both these cases the public becomes a prey to every miscreant who can tamper successfully with the follies either of age or infancy.

The most plausible plea which hath ever been offered in favor of hereditary succession is, that it preserves a nation from civil wars; and were this true, it would be weighty; whereas it is the most bare-faced falsity ever imposed upon mankind. The whole history of England disowns the fact. Thirty kings and two minors have reigned in that distracted kingdom since the conquest, in which time there has been (including the revolution) no less than eight

civil wars and nineteen Rebellions. Wherefore instead of making for peace, it makes against it, and destroys the very foundation it seems to stand upon.

The contest for monarchy and succession, between the houses of York and Lancaster, laid England in a scene of blood for many years. Twelve pitched battles besides skirmishes and sieges were fought between Henry and Edward. Twice was Henry prisoner to Edward, who in his turn was prisoner to Henry. And so uncertain is the fate of war and the temper of a nation, when nothing but personal matters are the ground of a quarrel, that Henry was taken in triumph from a prison to a palace, and Edward obliged to fly from a palace to a foreign land; yet, as sudden transitions of temper are seldom lasting, Henry in his turn was driven from the throne, and Edward re-called to succeed him. The parliament always following the strongest side.

This contest began in the reign of Henry the Sixth, and was not entirely extinguished till Henry the Seventh, in whom the families were united. Including a period of 67 years, viz. from 1422 to 1489.

In short, monarchy and succession have laid (not this or that kingdom only) but the world in blood and ashes. 'Tis a form of government which the word of God bears testimony against, and blood will attend it.

If we enquire into the business of a King, we shall find that in some countries they may have none; and after sauntering away their lives without pleasure to themselves or advantage to the nation, withdraw from the scene, and leave their successors to tread the same idle round. In absolute monarchies the whole weight of business civil and military lies on the King; the children of Israel in their request for a king urged this plea, "that he may judge us, and go out before us and fight our battles." But in countries where he is neither a Judge nor a General, as in England, a man would be puzzled to know what IS his business.

The nearer any government approaches to a Republic, the less business there is for a King. It is somewhat difficult to find a proper name for the government of England. Sir William Meredith calls it a Republic; but in its present state it is unworthy of the name, because the corrupt influence of the Crown, by having all the places in its disposal, hath so effectually

swallowed up the power, and eaten out the virtue of the House of Commons (the Republican part in the constitution) that the government of England is nearly as monarchical as that of France or Spain. Men fall out with names without understanding them. For 'tis the Republican and not the Monarchical part of the Constitution of England which Englishmen glory in, viz. the liberty of choosing an House of Commons from out of their own body — and it is easy to see that when Republican virtues fail, slavery ensues. Why is the constitution of England sickly, but because monarchy hath poisoned the Republic; the Crown hath engrossed the Commons.

In England a King hath little more to do than to make war and give away places; which, in plain terms, is to impoverish the nation and set it together by the ears. A pretty business indeed for a man to be allowed eight hundred thousand sterling a year for, and worshipped into the bargain! Of more worth is one honest man to society, and in the sight of God, than all the crowned ruffians that ever lived.

Thoughts on the Present State of American Affairs

IN the following pages I offer nothing more than simple facts, plain arguments, and common sense: and have no other preliminaries to settle with the reader, than that he will divest himself of prejudice and prepossession, and suffer his reason and his feelings to determine for themselves that he will put on, or rather that he will not put off, the true character of a man, and generously enlarge his views beyond the present day.

Volumes have been written on the subject of the struggle between England and America. Men of all ranks have embarked in the controversy, from different motives, and with various designs; but all have been ineffectual, and the period of debate is closed. Arms as the last resource decide the contest; the appeal was the choice of the King, and the Continent has accepted the challenge.

It hath been reported of the late Mr. Pelham (who tho' an able minister was not without his faults) that on his being attacked in the House of Commons on the score that his measures were only of a temporary kind, replied,

"THEY WILL LAST MY TIME." Should a thought so fatal and unmanly possess the Colonies in the present contest, the name of ancestors will be remembered by future generations with detestation.

The Sun never shined on a cause of greater worth. 'Tis not the affair of a City, a County, a Province, or a Kingdom; but of a Continent — of at least one-eighth part of the habitable Globe. 'Tis not the concern of a day, a year, or an age; posterity are virtually involved in the contest, and will be more or less affected even to the end of time, by the proceedings now. Now is the seed-time of Continental union, faith and honour. The least fracture now will be like a name engraved with the point of a pin on the tender rind of a young oak; the wound would enlarge with the tree, and posterity read in it full grown characters.

By referring the matter from argument to arms, a new era for politics is struck — a new method of thinking hath arisen. All plans, proposals, &c. prior to the nineteenth of April, i.e. to the commencement of hostilities, are like the almanacks of the last year; which tho' proper then, are superseded and useless now. Whatever was advanced by the advocates on either side of the question then, terminated in one and the same point, viz. a union with Great Britain; the only difference between the parties was the method of effecting it; the one proposing force, the other friendship; but it hath so far happened that the first hath failed, and the second hath withdrawn her influence.

As much hath been said of the advantages of reconciliation, which, like an agreeable dream, hath passed away and left us as we were, it is but right that we should examine the contrary side of the argument, and enquire into some of the many material injuries which these Colonies sustain, and always will sustain, by being connected with and dependent on Great Britain. To examine that connection and dependence, on the principles of nature and common sense, to see what we have to trust to, if separated, and what we are to expect, if dependent.

I have heard it asserted by some, that as America has flourished under her former connection with Great Britain, the same connection is necessary towards her future happiness, and will always have the same effect. Nothing can be more fallacious than this kind of argument. We may as well assert

that because a child has thrived upon milk, that it is never to have meat, or that the first twenty years of our lives is to become a precedent for the next twenty. But even this is admitting more than is true; for I answer roundly that America would have flourished as much, and probably much more, had no European power taken any notice of her. The commerce by which she hath enriched herself are the necessaries of life, and will always have a market while eating is the custom of Europe.

But she has protected us, say some. That she hath engrossed us is true, and defended the Continent at our expense as well as her own, is admitted; and she would have defended Turkey from the same motive, viz. — for the sake of trade and dominion.

Alas! we have been long led away by ancient prejudices and made large sacrifices to superstition. We have boasted the protection of Great Britain, without considering, that her motive was INTEREST not ATTACHMENT; and that she did not protect us from OUR ENEMIES on OUR ACCOUNT; but from HER ENEMIES on HER OWN ACCOUNT, from those who had no quarrel with us on any OTHER ACCOUNT, and who will always be our enemies on the SAME ACCOUNT. Let Britain waive her pretensions to the Continent, or the Continent throw off the dependence, and we should be at peace with France and Spain, were they at war with Britain. The miseries of Hanover last war ought to warn us against connections.

It hath lately been asserted in parliament, that the Colonies have no relation to each other but through the Parent Country, i.e. that Pennsylvania and the Jerseys and so on for the rest, are sister Colonies by the way of England; this is certainly a very roundabout way of proving relationship, but it is the nearest and only true way of proving enmity (or enemyship, if I may so call it.) France and Spain never were, nor perhaps ever will be, our enemies as AMERICANS, but as our being the SUBJECTS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

But Britain is the parent country, say some. Then the more shame upon her conduct. Even brutes do not devour their young, nor savages make war upon their families. Wherefore, the assertion, if true, turns to her reproach; but it happens not to be true, or only partly so, and the phrase PARENT OR MOTHER COUNTRY hath been jesuitically adopted by the King and his parasites, with a low papistical design of gaining an unfair bias on the

credulous weakness of our minds. Europe, and not England, is the parent country of America. This new World hath been the asylum for the persecuted lovers of civil and religious liberty from EVERY PART of Europe. Hither have they fled, not from the tender embraces of the mother, but from the cruelty of the monster; and it is so far true of England, that the same tyranny which drove the first emigrants from home, pursues their descendants still.

In this extensive quarter of the globe, we forget the narrow limits of three hundred and sixty miles (the extent of England) and carry our friendship on a larger scale; we claim brotherhood with every European Christian, and triumph in the generosity of the sentiment.

It is pleasant to observe by what regular gradations we surmount the force of local prejudices, as we enlarge our acquaintance with the World. A man born in any town in England divided into parishes, will naturally associate most with his fellow parishioners (because their interests in many cases will be common) and distinguish him by the name of NEIGHBOR; if he meet him but a few miles from home, he drops the narrow idea of a street, and salutes him by the name of TOWNSMAN; if he travel out of the county and meet him in any other, he forgets the minor divisions of street and town, and calls him COUNTRYMAN, i.e. COUNTYMAN; but if in their foreign excursions they should associate in France, or any other part of EUROPE, their local remembrance would be enlarged into that of ENGLISHMEN. And by a just parity of reasoning, all Europeans meeting in America, or any other quarter of the globe, are COUNTRYMEN; for England, Holland, Germany, or Sweden, when compared with the whole, stand in the same places on the larger scale, which the divisions of street, town, and county do on the smaller ones; Distinctions too limited for Continental minds. Not one third of the inhabitants, even of this province, [Pennsylvania], are of English descent. Wherefore, I reprobate the phrase of Parent or Mother Country applied to England only, as being false, selfish, narrow and ungenerous.

But, admitting that we were all of English descent, what does it amount to? Nothing. Britain, being now an open enemy, extinguishes every other name and title: and to say that reconciliation is our duty, is truly farcical. The first

king of England, of the present line (William the Conqueror) was a Frenchman, and half the peers of England are descendants from the same country; wherefore, by the same method of reasoning, England ought to be governed by France.

Much hath been said of the united strength of Britain and the Colonies, that in conjunction they might bid defiance to the world. But this is mere presumption; the fate of war is uncertain, neither do the expressions mean anything; for this continent would never suffer itself to be drained of inhabitants, to support the British arms in either Asia, Africa, or Europe.

Besides, what have we to do with setting the world at defiance? Our plan is commerce, and that, well attended to, will secure us the peace and friendship of all Europe; because it is the interest of all Europe to have America a free port. Her trade will always be a protection, and her barrenness of gold and silver secure her from invaders.

I challenge the warmest advocate for reconciliation to show a single advantage that this continent can reap by being connected with Great Britain. I repeat the challenge; not a single advantage is derived. Our corn will fetch its price in any market in Europe, and our imported goods must be paid for buy them where we will.

But the injuries and disadvantages which we sustain by that connection, are without number; and our duty to mankind at large, as well as to ourselves, instruct us to renounce the alliance: because, any submission to, or dependence on, Great Britain, tends directly to involve this Continent in European wars and quarrels, and set us at variance with nations who would otherwise seek our friendship, and against whom we have neither anger nor complaint. As Europe is our market for trade, we ought to form no partial connection with any part of it. It is the true interest of America to steer clear of European contentions, which she never can do, while, by her dependence on Britain, she is made the makeweight in the scale of British politics.

Europe is too thickly planted with Kingdoms to be long at peace, and whenever a war breaks out between England and any foreign power, the trade of America goes to ruin, BECAUSE OF HER CONNECTION WITH BRITAIN. The next war may not turn out like the last, and should it not, the

advocates for reconciliation now will be wishing for separation then, because neutrality in that case would be a safer convoy than a man of war. Every thing that is right or reasonable pleads for separation. The blood of the slain, the weeping voice of nature cries, 'TIS TIME TO PART. Even the distance at which the Almighty hath placed England and America is a strong and natural proof that the authority of the one over the other, was never the design of Heaven. The time likewise at which the Continent was discovered, adds weight to the argument, and the manner in which it was peopled, encreases the force of it. The Reformation was preceded by the discovery of America: As if the Almighty graciously meant to open a sanctuary to the persecuted in future years, when home should afford neither friendship nor safety.

The authority of Great Britain over this continent, is a form of government, which sooner or later must have an end: And a serious mind can draw no true pleasure by looking forward, under the painful and positive conviction that what he calls "the present constitution" is merely temporary. As parents, we can have no joy, knowing that this government is not sufficiently lasting to ensure any thing which we may bequeath to posterity: And by a plain method of argument, as we are running the next generation into debt, we ought to do the work of it, otherwise we use them meanly and pitifully. In order to discover the line of our duty rightly, we should take our children in our hand, and fix our station a few years farther into life; that eminence will present a prospect which a few present fears and prejudices conceal from our sight.

Though I would carefully avoid giving unnecessary offence, yet I am inclined to believe, that all those who espouse the doctrine of reconciliation, may be included within the following descriptions. Interested men, who are not to be trusted, weak men who CANNOT see, prejudiced men who will not see, and a certain set of moderate men who think better of the European world than it deserves; and this last class, by an ill-judged deliberation, will be the cause of more calamities to this Continent than all the other three.

It is the good fortune of many to live distant from the scene of present sorrow; the evil is not sufficiently brought to their doors to make them feel the precariousness with which all American property is possessed. But let

our imaginations transport us a few moments to Boston; that seat of wretchedness will teach us wisdom, and instruct us for ever to renounce a power in whom we can have no trust. The inhabitants of that unfortunate city who but a few months ago were in ease and affluence, have now no other alternative than to stay and starve, or turn out to beg. Endangered by the fire of their friends if they continue within the city and plundered by the soldiery if they leave it, in their present situation they are prisoners without the hope of redemption, and in a general attack for their relief they would be exposed to the fury of both armies.

Men of passive tempers look somewhat lightly over the offences of Great Britain, and, still hoping for the best, are apt to call out, "Come, come, we shall be friends again for all this." But examine the passions and feelings of mankind: bring the doctrine of reconciliation to the touchstone of nature, and then tell me whether you can hereafter love, honour, and faithfully serve the power that hath carried fire and sword into your land? If you cannot do all these, then are you only deceiving yourselves, and by your delay bringing ruin upon posterity. Your future connection with Britain, whom you can neither love nor honour, will be forced and unnatural, and being formed only on the plan of present convenience, will in a little time fall into a relapse more wretched than the first. But if you say, you can still pass the violations over, then I ask, hath your house been burnt? Hath your property been destroyed before your face? Are your wife and children destitute of a bed to lie on, or bread to live on? Have you lost a parent or a child by their hands, and yourself the ruined and wretched survivor? If you have not, then are you not a judge of those who have. But if you have, and can still shake hands with the murderers, then are you unworthy the name of husband, father, friend or lover, and whatever may be your rank or title in life, you have the heart of a coward, and the spirit of a sycophant.

This is not inflaming or exaggerating matters, but trying them by those feelings and affections which nature justifies, and without which, we should be incapable of discharging the social duties of life, or enjoying the felicities of it. I mean not to exhibit horror for the purpose of provoking revenge, but to awaken us from fatal and unmanly slumbers, that we may pursue determinately some fixed object. It is not in the power of Britain or of Europe to conquer America, if she do not conquer herself by delay and

timidity. The present winter is worth an age if rightly employed, but if lost or neglected, the whole continent will partake of the misfortune; and there is no punishment which that man will not deserve, be he who, or what, or where he will, that may be the means of sacrificing a season so precious and useful.

It is repugnant to reason, to the universal order of things to all examples from former ages, to suppose, that this continent can longer remain subject to any external power. The most sanguine in Britain does not think so. The utmost stretch of human wisdom cannot, at this time, compass a plan short of separation, which can promise the continent even a year's security. Reconciliation is now a falacious dream. Nature hath deserted the connexion, and Art cannot supply her place. For, as Milton wisely expresses, "never can true reconcilement grow where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep."

Every quiet method for peace hath been ineffectual. Our prayers have been rejected with disdain; and only tended to convince us, that nothing flatters vanity, or confirms obstinacy in Kings more than repeated petitioning — and nothing hath contributed more than that very measure to make the Kings of Europe absolute: Witness Denmark and Sweden. Wherefore, since nothing but blows will do, for God's sake, let us come to a final separation, and not leave the next generation to be cutting throats, under the violated unmeaning names of parent and child.

To say, they will never attempt it again is idle and visionary, we thought so at the repeal of the stamp act, yet a year or two undeceived us; as well may we suppose that nations, which have been once defeated, will never renew the quarrel.

As to government matters, it is not in the power of Britain to do this continent justice: The business of it will soon be too weighty, and intricate, to be managed with any tolerable degree of convenience, by a power, so distant from us, and so very ignorant of us; for if they cannot conquer us, they cannot govern us. To be always running three or four thousand miles with a tale or a petition, waiting four or five months for an answer, which when obtained requires five or six more to explain it in, will in a few years

be looked upon as folly and childishness — There was a time when it was proper, and there is a proper time for it to cease.

Small islands not capable of protecting themselves, are the proper objects for kingdoms to take under their care; but there is something very absurd, in supposing a continent to be perpetually governed by an island. In no instance hath nature made the satellite larger than its primary planet, and as England and America, with respect to each other, reverses the common order of nature, it is evident they belong to different systems: England to Europe, America to itself.

I am not induced by motives of pride, party, or resentment to espouse the doctrine of separation and independence; I am clearly, positively, and conscientiously persuaded that it is the true interest of this continent to be so; that every thing short of that is mere patchwork, that it can afford no lasting felicity, — that it is leaving the sword to our children, and shrinking back at a time, when, a little more, a little farther, would have rendered this continent the glory of the earth.

As Britain hath not manifested the least inclination towards a compromise, we may be assured that no terms can be obtained worthy the acceptance of the continent, or any ways equal to the expense of blood and treasure we have been already put to.

The object, contended for, ought always to bear some just proportion to the expense. The removal of North, or the whole detestable junto, is a matter unworthy the millions we have expended. A temporary stoppage of trade, was an inconvenience, which would have sufficiently balanced the repeal of all the acts complained of, had such repeals been obtained; but if the whole continent must take up arms, if every man must be a soldier, it is scarcely worth our while to fight against a contemptible ministry only. Dearly, dearly, do we pay for the repeal of the acts, if that is all we fight for; for in a just estimation, it is as great a folly to pay a Bunker-hill price for law, as for land. As I have always considered the independency of this continent, as an event, which sooner or later must arrive, so from the late rapid progress of the continent to maturity, the event could not be far off. Wherefore, on the breaking out of hostilities, it was not worth the while to have disputed a matter, which time would have finally redressed, unless we meant to be in

earnest; otherwise, it is like wasting an estate on a suit at law, to regulate the trespasses of a tenant, whose lease is just expiring. No man was a warmer wisher for reconciliation than myself, before the fatal nineteenth of April 1775, but the moment the event of that day was made known, I rejected the hardened, sullen tempered Pharaoh of England for ever; and disdain the wretch, that with the pretended title of FATHER OF HIS PEOPLE, can unfeelingly hear of their slaughter, and composedly sleep with their blood upon his soul.

But admitting that matters were now made up, what would be the event? I answer, the ruin of the continent. And that for several reasons.

First. The powers of governing still remaining in the hands of the king, he will have a negative over the whole legislation of this continent. And as he hath shewn himself such an inveterate enemy to liberty, and discovered such a thirst for arbitrary power; is he, or is he not, a proper man to say to these colonies, "You shall make no laws but what I please." And is there any inhabitant in America so ignorant, as not to know, that according to what is called the present constitution, that this continent can make no laws but what the king gives it leave to; and is there any man so unwise, as not to see, that (considering what has happened) he will suffer no law to be made here, but such as suit his purpose. We may be as effectually enslaved by the want of laws in America, as by submitting to laws made for us in England. After matters are made up (as it is called) can there be any doubt, but the whole power of the crown will be exerted, to keep this continent as low and humble as possible? Instead of going forward we shall go backward, or be perpetually quarrelling or ridiculously petitioning. — We are already greater than the king wishes us to be, and will he not hereafter endeavour to make us less? To bring the matter to one point. Is the power who is jealous of our prosperity, a proper power to govern us? Whoever says No to this question is an independent, for independency means no more, than, whether we shall make our own laws, or, whether the king, the greatest enemy this continent hath, or can have, shall tell us, "there shall be no laws but such as I like."

But the king you will say has a negative in England; the people there can make no laws without his consent. In point of right and good order, there is

something very ridiculous, that a youth of twenty-one (which hath often happened) shall say to several millions of people, older and wiser than himself, I forbid this or that act of yours to be law. But in this place I decline this sort of reply, though I will never cease to expose the absurdity of it, and only answer, that England being the King's residence, and America not so, make quite another case. The king's negative here is ten times more dangerous and fatal than it can be in England, for there he will scarcely refuse his consent to a bill for putting England into as strong a state of defence as possible, and in America he would never suffer such a bill to be passed.

America is only a secondary object in the system of British politics, England consults the good of thiscountry, no farther than it answers her own purpose. Wherefore, her own interest leads her to suppress the growth of ours in every case which doth not promote her advantage, or in the least interferes with it. A pretty state we should soon be in under such a second-hand government, considering what has happened! Men do not change from enemies to friends by the alteration of a name: And in order to shew that reconciliation now is a dangerous doctrine, I affirm, that it would be policy in the king at this time, to repeal the acts for the sake of reinstating himself in the government of the provinces; in order that HE MAY ACCOMPLISH BY CRAFT AND SUBTILITY, IN THE LONG RUN, WHAT HE CANNOT DO BY FORCE AND VIOLENCE IN THE SHORT ONE.

Reconciliation and ruin are nearly related.

Secondly. That as even the best terms, which we can expect to obtain, can amount to no more than a temporary expedient, or a kind of government by guardianship, which can last no longer than till the colonies come of age, so the general face and state of things, in the interim, will be unsettled and unpromising. Emigrants of property will not choose to come to a country whose form of government hangs but by a thread, and who is every day tottering on the brink of commotion and disturbance; and numbers of the present inhabitants would lay hold of the interval, to dispose of their effects, and quit the continent.

But the most powerful of all arguments, is, that nothing but independence, i. e. a continental form of government, can keep the peace of the continent

and preserve it inviolate from civil wars. I dread the event of a reconciliation with Britain now, as it is more than probable, that it will be followed by a revolt somewhere or other, the consequences of which may be far more fatal than all the malice of Britain.

Thousands are already ruined by British barbarity; (thousands more will probably suffer the same fate.) Those men have other feelings than us who have nothing suffered. All they now possess is liberty, what they before enjoyed is sacrificed to its service, and having nothing more to lose, they disdain submission. Besides, the general temper of the colonies, towards a British government, will be like that of a youth, who is nearly out of his time; they will care very little about her. And a government which cannot preserve the peace, is no government at all, and in that case we pay our money for nothing; and pray what is it that Britain can do, whose power will be wholly on paper, should a civil tumult break out the very day after reconciliation? I have heard some men say, many of whom I believe spoke without thinking, that they dreaded an independence, fearing that it would produce civil wars. It is but seldom that our first thoughts are truly correct, and that is the case here; for there are ten times more to dread from a patched up connexion than from independence. I make the sufferers case my own, and I protest, that were I driven from house and home, my property destroyed, and my circumstances ruined, that as a man, sensible of injuries, I could never relish the doctrine of reconciliation, or consider myself bound thereby.

The colonies have manifested such a spirit of good order and obedience to continental government, as is sufficient to make every reasonable person easy and happy on that head. No man can assign the least pretence for his fears, on any other grounds, than such as are truly childish and ridiculous, viz. that one colony will be striving for superiority over another.

Where there are no distinctions there can be no superiority, perfect equality affords no temptation. The republics of Europe are all (and we may say always) in peace. Holland and Switzerland are without wars, foreign or domestic: Monarchical governments, it is true, are never long at rest; the crown itself is a temptation to enterprizing ruffians at home; and that degree of pride and insolence ever attendant on regal authority, swells into a

rupture with foreign powers, in instances, where a republican government, by being formed on more natural principles, would negotiate the mistake.

If there is any true cause of fear respecting independence, it is because no plan is yet laid down. Men do not see their way out — Wherefore, as an opening into that business, I offer the following hints; at the same time modestly affirming, that I have no other opinion of them myself, than that they may be the means of giving rise to something better. Could the straggling thoughts of individuals be collected, they would frequently form materials for wise and able men to improve into useful matter.

Let the assemblies be annual, with a President only. The representation more equal. Their business wholly domestic, and subject to the authority of a Continental Congress.

Let each colony be divided into six, eight, or ten, convenient districts, each district to send a proper number of delegates to Congress, so that each colony send at least thirty. The whole number in Congress will be least 390. Each Congress to sit and to choose a president by the following method. When the delegates are met, let a colony be taken from the whole thirteen colonies by lot, after which, let the whole Congress choose (by ballot) a president from out of the delegates of that province. In the next Congress, let a colony be taken by lot from twelve only, omitting that colony from which the president was taken in the former Congress, and so proceeding on till the whole thirteen shall have had their proper rotation. And in order that nothing may pass into a law but what is satisfactorily just, not less than three fifths of the Congress to be called a majority. — He that will promote discord, under a government so equally formed as this, would have joined Lucifer in his revolt.

But as there is a peculiar delicacy, from whom, or in what manner, this business must first arise, and as it seems most agreeable and consistent that it should come from some intermediate body between the governed and the governors, that is, between the Congress and the people, let a CONTINENTAL CONFERENCE be held, in the following manner, and for the following purpose.

A committee of twenty-six members of Congress, viz. two for each colony. Two members for each House of Assembly, or Provincial Convention; and five representatives of the people at large, to be chosen in the capital city or town of each province, for, and in behalf of the whole province, by as many qualified voters as shall think proper to attend from all parts of the province for that purpose; or, if more convenient, the representatives may be chosen in two or three of the most populous parts thereof. In this conference, thus assembled, will be united, the two grand principles of business, knowledge and power. The members of Congress, Assemblies, or Conventions, by having had experience in national concerns, will be able and useful counsellors, and the whole, being empowered by the people, will have a truly legal authority.

The conferring members being met, let their business be to frame a CONTINENTAL CHARTER, or Charter of the United Colonies; (answering to what is called the Magna Charta of England) fixing the number and manner of choosing members of Congress, members of Assembly, with their date of sitting, and drawing the line of business and jurisdiction between them: (Always remembering, that our strength is continental, not provincial:) Securing freedom and property to all men, and above all things, the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience; with such other matter as is necessary for a charter to contain. Immediately after which, the said Conference to dissolve, and the bodies which shall be chosen conformable to the said charter, to be the legislators and governors of this continent for the time being: Whose peace and happiness, may God preserve, Amen.

Should any body of men be hereafter delegated for this or some similar purpose, I offer them the following extracts from that wise observer on governments Dragonetti. "The science" says he "of the politician consists in fixing the true point of happiness and freedom. Those men would deserve the gratitude of ages, who should discover a mode of government that contained the greatest sum of individual happiness, with the least national expense."

But where says some is the King of America? I'll tell you Friend, he reigns above, and doth not make havoc of mankind like the Royal Brute of Britain.

Yet that we may not appear to be defective even in earthly honors, let a day be solemnly set apart for proclaiming the charter; let it be brought forth placed on the divine law, the word of God; let a crown be placed thereon, by which the world may know, that so far as we approve as monarchy, that in America THE LAW IS KING. For as in absolute governments the King is law, so in free countries the law ought to be King; and there ought to be no other. But lest any ill use should afterwards arise, let the crown at the conclusion of the ceremony be demolished, and scattered among the people whose right it is.

A government of our own is our natural right: And when a man seriously reflects on the precariousness of human affairs, he will become convinced, that it is infinitely wiser and safer, to form a constitution of our own in a cool deliberate manner, while we have it in our power, than to trust such an interesting event to time and chance. If we omit it now, some, Massanello may hereafter arise, who laying hold of popular disquietudes, may collect together the desperate and discontented, and by assuming to themselves the powers of government, may sweep away the liberties of the continent like a deluge. Should the government of America return again into the hands of Britain, the tottering situation of things, will be a temptation for some desperate adventurer to try his fortune; and in such a case, what relief can Britain give? Ere she could hear the news, the fatal business might be done; and ourselves suffering like the wretched Britons under the oppression of the Conqueror. Ye that oppose independence now, ye know not what ye do; ye are opening a door to eternal tyranny, by keeping vacant the seat of government. There are thousands, and tens of thousands, who would think it glorious to expel from the continent, that barbarous and hellish power, which hath stirred up the Indians and Negroes to destroy us, the cruelty hath a double guilt, it is dealing brutally by us, and treacherously by them.

To talk of friendship with those in whom our reason forbids us to have faith, and our affections wounded through a thousand pores instruct us to detest, is madness and folly. Every day wears out the little remains of kindred between us and them, and can there be any reason to hope, that as the relationship expires, the affection will increase, or that we shall agree better, when we have ten times more and greater concerns to quarrel over than ever?

Ye that tell us of harmony and reconciliation, can ye restore to us the time that is past? Can ye give to prostitution its former innocence? Neither can ye reconcile Britain and America. The last cord now is broken, the people of England are presenting addresses against us. There are injuries which nature cannot forgive; she would cease to be nature if she did. As well can the lover forgive the ravisher of his mistress, as the continent forgive the murders of Britain. The Almighty hath implanted in us these unextinguishable feelings for good and wise purposes. They are the guardians of his image in our hearts. They distinguish us from the herd of common animals. The social compact would dissolve, and justice be extirpated from the earth, or have only a casual existence were we callous to the touches of affection. The robber, and the murderer, would often escape unpunished, did not the injuries which our tempers sustain, provoke us into justice.

O ye that love mankind! Ye that dare oppose, not only the tyranny, but the tyrant, stand forth! Every spot of the old world is overrun with oppression. Freedom hath been hunted round the globe. Asia, and Africa, have long expelled her. — Europe regards her like a stranger, and England hath given her warning to depart. O! receive the fugitive, and prepare in time an asylum for mankind.

Of the Present Ability of America: with some Miscellaneous Reflections

I HAVE never met with a man, either in England or America, who hath not confessed his opinion, that a separation between the countries would take place one time or other: And there is no instance in which we have shown less judgment, than in endeavoring to describe, what we call, the ripeness or fitness of the continent for independence.

As all men allow the measure, and vary only in their opinion of the time, let us, in order to remove mistakes, take a general survey of things, and endeavor if possible to find out the VERY time. But I need not go far, the inquiry ceases at once, for the TIME HATH FOUND US. The general concurrence, the glorious union of all things, proves the fact.

'Tis not in numbers but in unity that our great strength lies: yet our present numbers are sufficient to repel the force of all the world. The Continent hath at this time the largest body of armed and disciplined men of any power under Heaven: and is just arrived at that pitch of strength, in which no single colony is able to support itself, and the whole, when united, is able to do any thing. Our land force is more than sufficient, and as to Naval affairs, we cannot be insensible that Britain would never suffer an American man of war to be built, while the Continent remained in her hands.

Wherefore, we should be no forwarder an hundred years hence in that branch than we are now; but the truth is, we should be less so, because the timber of the Country is every day diminishing, and that which will remain at last, will be far off or difficult to procure.

Were the Continent crowded with inhabitants, her sufferings under the present circumstances would be intolerable. The more seaport-towns we had, the more should we have both to defend and to lose. Our present numbers are so happily proportioned to our wants, that no man need be idle. The diminution of trade affords an army, and the necessities of an army create a new trade.

Debts we have none: and whatever we may contract on this account will serve as a glorious memento of our virtue. Can we but leave posterity with a settled form of government, an independent constitution of its own, the purchase at any price will be cheap. But to expend millions for the sake of getting a few vile acts repealed, and routing the present ministry only, is unworthy the charge, and is using posterity with the utmost cruelty; because it is leaving them the great work to do, and a debt upon their backs from which they derive no advantage. Such a thought's unworthy a man of honour, and is the true characteristic of a narrow heart and a piddling politician.

The debt we may contract doth not deserve our regard if the work be but accomplished. No nation ought to be without a debt. A national debt is a national bond; and when it bears no interest, is in no case a grievance. Britain is oppressed with a debt of upwards of one hundred and forty millions sterling, for which she pays upwards of four millions interest. And as a compensation for her debt, she has a large navy; America is without a

debt, and without a navy; yet for the twentieth part of the English national debt, could have a navy as large again. The navy of England is not worth at this time more than three millions and a half sterling.

The first and second editions of this pamphlet were published without the following calculations, which are now given as a proof that the above estimation of the navy is a just one. See Entic's "Naval History," Intro., p. 56.

The charge of building a ship of each rate, and furnishing her with masts, yards, sails, and rigging, together with a proportion of eight months boatswain's and carpenter's sea-stores, as calculated by Mr. Burchett, Secretary to the navy.

FIRST CHART HEERE

And hence it is easy to sum up the value, or cost, rather, of the whole British navy, which, in the year 1757, when it was at its greatest glory, consisted of the following ships and guns.

FIRST CHART HERE

No country on the globe is so happily situated, or so internally capable of raising a fleet as America. Tar, timber, iron, and cordage are her natural produce. We need go abroad for nothing. Whereas the Dutch, who make large profits by hiring out their ships of war to the Spaniards and Portuguese, are obliged to import most of the materials they use. We ought to view the building a fleet as an article of commerce, it being the natural manufactory of this country. 'Tis the best money we can lay out. A navy when finished is worth more than it cost: And is that nice point in national policy, in which commerce and protection are united. Let us build; if we want them not, we can sell; and by that means replace our paper currency with ready gold and silver.

In point of manning a fleet, people in general run into great errors; it is not necessary that one-fourth part should be sailors. The Terrible privateer, captain Death, stood the hottest engagement of any ship last war, yet had not twenty sailors on board, though her complement of men was upwards of

two hundred. A few able and social sailors will soon instruct a sufficient number of active landsmen in the common work of a ship. Wherefore we never can be more capable of beginning on maritime matters than now, while our timber is standing, our fisheries blocked up, and our sailors and shipwrights out of employ. Men of war, of seventy and eighty guns, were built forty years ago in New England, and why not the same now? Ship building is America's greatest pride, and in which she will, in time, excel the whole world. The great empires of the east are mainly inland, and consequently excluded from the possibility of rivalling her. Africa is in a state of barbarism; and no power in Europe hath either such an extent of coast, or such an internal supply of materials. Where nature hath given the one, she hath withheld the other; to America only hath she been liberal to both. The vast empire of Russia is almost shut out from the sea; wherefore her boundless forests, her tar, iron and cordage are only articles of commerce.

In point of safety, ought we to be without a fleet? We are not the little people now which we were sixty years ago; at that time we might have trusted our property in the streets, or fields rather, and slept securely without locks or bolts to our doors and windows. The case is now altered, and our methods of defence ought to improve with our increase of property. A common pirate, twelve months ago, might have come up the Delaware, and laid the city of Philadelphia under contribution for what sum he pleased; and the same might have happened to other places. Nay, any daring fellow, in a brig of fourteen or sixteen guns, might have robbed the whole Continent, and carried off half a million of money. These are circumstances which demand our attention, and point out the necessity of naval protection.

Some perhaps will say, that after we have made it up with Britain, she will protect us. Can they be so unwise as to mean that she will keep a navy in our harbors for that purpose? Common sense will tell us that the power which hath endeavoured to subdue us, is of all others the most improper to defend us. Conquest may be effected under the pretence of friendship; and ourselves, after a long and brave resistance, be at last cheated into slavery. And if her ships are not to be admitted into our harbours, I would ask, how is she going to protect us? A navy three or four thousand miles off can be of little use, and on sudden emergencies, none at all. Wherefore if we must

hereafter protect ourselves, why not do it for ourselves? Why do it for another?

The English list of ships of war is long and formidable, but not a tenth part of them are at any time fit for service, numbers of them are not in being; yet their names are pompously continued in the list; if only a plank be left of the ship; and not a fifth part of such as are fit for service can be spared on any one station at one time. The East and West Indies, Mediterranean, Africa, and other parts, over which Britain extends her claim, make large demands upon her navy. From a mixture of prejudice and inattention we have contracted a false notion respecting the navy of England, and have talked as if we should have the whole of it to encounter at once, and for that reason supposed that we must have one as large; which not being instantly practicable, has been made use of by a set of disguised Tories to discourage our beginning thereon. Nothing can be further from truth than this; for if America had only a twentieth part of the naval force of Britain, she would be by far an over-match for her; because, as we neither have, nor claim any foreign dominion, our whole force would be employed on our own coast, where we should, in the long run, have two to one the advantage of those who had three or four thousand miles to sail over before they could attack us, and the same distance to return in order to refit and recruit. And although Britain, by her fleet, hath a check over our trade to Europe, we have as large a one over her trade to the West Indies, which, by laying in the neighborhood of the Continent, lies entirely at its mercy.

Some method might be fallen on to keep up a naval force in time of peace, if we should judge it necessary to support a constant navy. If premiums were to be given to merchants to build and employ in their service ships mounted with twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty guns (the premiums to be in proportion to the loss of bulk to the merchant), fifty or sixty of those ships, with a few guardships on constant duty, would keep up a sufficient navy, and that without burdening ourselves with the evil so loudly complained of in England, of suffering their fleet in time of peace to lie rotting in the docks. To unite the sinews of commerce and defence is sound policy; for when our strength and our riches play into each other's hand, we need fear no external enemy.

In almost every article of defence we abound. Hemp flourishes even to rankness so that we need not want cordage. Our iron is superior to that of other countries. Our small arms equal to any in the world. Cannon we can cast at pleasure. Saltpetre and gunpowder we are every day producing. Our knowledge is hourly improving. Resolution is our inherent character, and courage hath never yet forsaken us. Wherefore, what is it that we want? Why is it that we hesitate? From Britain we can expect nothing but ruin. If she is once admitted to the government of America again, this Continent will not be worth living in. Jealousies will be always arising; insurrections will be constantly happening; and who will go forth to quell them? Who will venture his life to reduce his own countrymen to a foreign obedience? The difference between Pennsylvania and Connecticut, respecting some unlocated lands, shows the insignificance of a British government, and fully proves that nothing but Continental authority can regulate Continental matters.

Another reason why the present time is preferable to all others is, that the fewer our numbers are, the more land there is yet unoccupied, which, instead of being lavished by the king on his worthless dependents, may be hereafter applied, not only to the discharge of the present debt, but to the constant support of government. No nation under Heaven hath such an advantage as this.

The infant state of the Colonies, as it is called, so far from being against, is an argument in favour of independence. We are sufficiently numerous, and were we more so we might be less united. 'Tis a matter worthy of observation that the more a country is peopled, the smaller their armies are. In military numbers, the ancients far exceeded the moderns; and the reason is evident, for trade being the consequence of population, men became too much absorbed thereby to attend to anything else. Commerce diminishes the spirit both of patriotism and military defence. And history sufficiently informs us that the bravest achievements were always accomplished in the non-age of a nation. With the increase of commerce England hath lost its spirit. The city of London, notwithstanding its numbers, submits to continued insults with the patience of a coward. The more men have to lose, the less willing are they to venture. The rich are in general slaves to fear, and submit to courtly power with the trembling duplicity of a spaniel.

Youth is the seed-time of good habits as well in nations as in individuals. It might be difficult, if not impossible, to form the Continent into one government half a century hence. The vast variety of interests, occasioned by an increase of trade and population, would create confusion. Colony would be against colony. Each being able would scorn each other's assistance; and while the proud and foolish gloried in their little distinctions the wise would lament that the union had not been formed before.

Wherefore the present time is the true time for establishing it. The intimacy which is contracted in infancy, and the friendship which is formed in misfortune, are of all others the most lasting and unalterable. Our present union is marked with both these characters; we are young, and we have been distressed; but our concord hath withstood our troubles, and fixes a memorable era for posterity to glory in.

The present time, likewise, is that peculiar time which never happens to a nation but once, viz., the time of forming itself into a government. Most nations have let slip the opportunity, and by that means have been compelled to receive laws from their conquerors, instead of making laws for themselves. First, they had a king, and then a form of government; whereas the articles or charter of government should be formed first, and men delegated to execute them afterwards; but from the errors of other nations let us learn wisdom, and lay hold of the present opportunity — TO BEGIN GOVERNMENT AT THE RIGHT END.

When William the Conqueror subdued England, he gave them law at the point of the sword; and, until we consent that the seat of government in America be legally and authoritatively occupied, we shall be in danger of having it filled by some fortunate ruffian, who may treat us in the same manner, and then, where will be our freedom? Where our property?

As to religion, I hold it to be the indispensable duty of government to protect all conscientious professors thereof, and I know of no other business which government hath to do therewith. Let a man throw aside that narrowness of soul, that selfishness of principle, which the niggards of all professions are so unwilling to part with, and he will be at once delivered of his fears on that head. Suspicion is the companion of mean souls, and the bane of all good society. For myself, I fully and conscientiously believe that

it is the will of the Almighty that there should be a diversity of religious opinions among us. It affords a larger field for our Christian kindness; were we all of one way of thinking, our religious dispositions would want matter for probation; and on this liberal principle I look on the various denominations among us to be like children of the same family, differing only in what is called their Christian names.

In page [97] I threw out a few thoughts on the propriety of a Continental Charter (for I only presume to offer hints, not plans) and in this place I take the liberty of re-mentioning the subject, by observing that a charter is to be understood as a bond of solemn obligation, which the whole enters into, to support the right of every separate part, whether of religion, professional freedom, or property. A firm bargain and a right reckoning make long friends.

I have heretofore likewise mentioned the necessity of a large and equal representation; and there is no political matter which more deserves our attention. A small number of electors, or a small number of representatives, are equally dangerous. But if the number of the representatives be not only small, but unequal, the danger is increased. As an instance of this, I mention the following: when the petition of the associators was before the House of Assembly of Pennsylvania, twenty-eight members only were present; all the Bucks county members, being eight, voted against it, and had seven of the Chester members done the same, this whole province had been governed by two counties only; and this danger it is always exposed to. The unwarrantable stretch likewise, which that house made in their last sitting, to gain an undue authority over the delegates of that province, ought to warn the people at large how they trust power out of their own hands. A set of instructions for their delegates were put together, which in point of sense and business would have dishonoured a school-boy, and after being approved by a few, a very few, without doors, were carried into the house, and there passed IN BEHALF OF THE WHOLE COLONY; whereas, did the whole colony know with what ill will that house had entered on some necessary public measures, they would not hesitate a moment to think them unworthy of such a trust.

Immediate necessity makes many things convenient, which if continued would grow into oppressions. Expediency and right are different things. When the calamities of America required a consultation, there was no method so ready, or at that time so proper, as to appoint persons from the several houses of assembly for that purpose; and the wisdom with which they have proceeded hath preserved this Continent from ruin. But as it is more than probable that we shall never be without a CONGRESS, every well wisher to good order must own that the mode for choosing members of that body deserves consideration. And I put it as a question to those who make a study of mankind, whether representation and election is not too great a power for one and the same body of men to possess? When we are planning for posterity, we ought to remember that virtue is not hereditary.

It is from our enemies that we often gain excellent maxims, and are frequently surprised into reason by their mistakes. Mr. Cornwall (one of the Lords of the Treasury) treated the petition of the New York Assembly with contempt, because THAT house, he said, consisted but of twenty-six members, which trifling number, he argued, could not with decency be put for the whole. We thank him for his involuntary honesty.

To CONCLUDE, however strange it may appear to some, or however unwilling they may be to think so, matters not, but many strong and striking reasons may be given to show that nothing can settle our affairs so expeditiously as an open and determined declaration for independence. Some of which are,

First. — It is the custom of Nations, when any two are at war, for some other powers, not engaged in the quarrel, to step in as mediators, and bring about the preliminaries of a peace; But while America calls herself the subject of Great Britain, no power, however well disposed she may be, can offer her mediation. Wherefore, in our present state we may quarrel on for ever.

Secondly. — It is unreasonable to suppose that France or Spain will give us any kind of assistance, if we mean only to make use of that assistance for the purpose of repairing the breach, and strengthening the connection between Britain and America; because, those powers would be sufferers by the consequences.

Thirdly. — While we profess ourselves the subjects of Britain, we must, in the eyes of foreign nations, be considered as Rebels. The precedent is somewhat dangerous to their peace, for men to be in arms under the name of subjects; we, on the spot, can solve the paradox; but to unite resistance and subjection requires an idea much too refined for common understanding.

Fourthly. — Were a manifesto to be published, and despatched to foreign Courts, setting forth the miseries we have endured, and the peaceful methods which we have ineffectually used for redress; declaring at the same time that not being able longer to live happily or safely under the cruel disposition of the British Court, we had been driven to the necessity of breaking off all connections with her; at the same time, assuring all such Courts of our peaceable disposition towards them, and of our desire of entering into trade with them; such a memorial would produce more good effects to this Continent than if a ship were freighted with petitions to Britain.

Under our present denomination of British subjects, we can neither be received nor heard abroad; the custom of all Courts is against us, and will be so, until by an independence we take rank with other nations.

These proceedings may at first seem strange and difficult, but like all other steps which we have already passed over, will in a little time become familiar and agreeable; and until an independence is declared, the Continent will feel itself like a man who continues putting off some unpleasant business from day to day, yet knows it must be done, hates to set about it, wishes it over, and is continually haunted with the thoughts of its necessity.

SINCE the publication of the first edition of this pamphlet, or rather, on the same day on which it came out, the [king's speech](#) made its appearance in this city. Had the spirit of prophecy directed the birth of this production, it could not have brought it forth at a more seasonable juncture, or at a more necessary time. The bloody-mindedness of the one, shows the necessity of pursuing the doctrine of the other. Men read by way of revenge. And the speech, instead of terrifying, prepared a way for the manly principles of independence.

Ceremony, and even silence, from whatever motives they may arise, have a hurtful tendency when they give the least degree of countenance to base and wicked performances, wherefore, if this maxim be admitted, it naturally follows, that the king's speech, IS being a piece of finished villany, deserved and still deserves, a general execration, both by the Congress and the people.

Yet, as the domestic tranquillity of a nation, depends greatly on the chastity of what might properly be called NATIONAL MANNERS, it is often better to pass some things over in silent disdain, than to make use of such new methods of dislike, as might introduce the least innovation on that guardian of our peace and safety. And, perhaps, it is chiefly owing to this prudent delicacy, that the king's speech hath not before now suffered a public execution. The speech, if it may be called one, is nothing better than a wilful audacious libel against the truth, the common good, and the existence of mankind; and is a formal and pompous method of offering up human sacrifices to the pride of tyrants.

But this general massacre of mankind, is one of the privileges and the certain consequences of kings, for as nature knows them not, they know not her, and although they are beings of our own creating, they know not us, and are become the gods of their creators. The speech hath one good quality, which is, that it is not calculated to deceive, neither can we, even if we would, be deceived by it. Brutality and tyranny appear on the face of it. It leaves us at no loss: And every line convinces, even in the moment of reading, that he who hunts the woods for prey, the naked and untutored Indian, is less savage than the king of Britain.

Sir John Dalrymple, the putative father of a whining jesuitical piece, fallaciously called, "The address of the people of England to the inhabitants of America," hath perhaps from a vain supposition that the people here were to be frightened at the pomp and description of a king, given (though very unwisely on his part) the real character of the present one: "But," says this writer, "if you are inclined to pay compliments to an administration, which we do not complain of (meaning the Marquis of Rockingham's at the repeal of the Stamp Act) it is very unfair in you to withhold them from that prince, by whose NOD ALONE they were permitted to do any thing." This

is toryism with a witness! Here is idolatry even without a mask: And he who can calmly hear and digest such doctrine, hath forfeited his claim to rationality an apostate from the order of manhood and ought to be considered as one who hath not only given up the proper dignity of man, but sunk himself beneath the rank of animals, and contemptibly crawls through the world like a worm.

However, it matters very little now what the king of England either says or does; he hath wickedly broken through every moral and human obligation, trampled nature and conscience beneath his feet, and by a steady and constitutional spirit of insolence and cruelty procured for himself an universal hatred. It is now the interest of America to provide for herself. She hath already a large and young family, whom it is more her duty to take care of, than to be granting away her property to support a power who is become a reproach to the names of men and christians, whose office it is to watch the morals of a nation, of whatsoever sect or denomination ye are of, as well as ye who are more immediately the guardians of the public liberty, if ye wish to preserve your native country uncontaminated by European corruption, ye must in secret wish a separation. But leaving the moral part to private reflection, I shall chiefly confine my further remarks to the following heads:

First, That it is the interest of America to be separated from Britain.

Secondly, Which is the easiest and most practicable plan,
RECONCILIATION or INDEPENDENCE? with some occasional remarks.

In support of the first, I could, if I judged it proper, produce the opinion of some of the ablest and most experienced men on this continent: and whose sentiments on that head, are not yet publicly known. It is in reality a self-evident position: for no nation in a state of foreign dependence, limited in its commerce, and cramped and fettered in its legislative powers, can ever arrive at any material eminence. America doth not yet know what opulence is; and although the progress which she hath made stands unparalleled in the history of other nations, it is but childhood compared with what she would be capable of arriving at, had she, as she ought to have, the legislative powers in her own hands. England is at this time proudly coveting what would do her no good were she to accomplish it; and the

continent hesitating on a matter which will be her final ruin if neglected. It is the commerce and not the conquest of America by which England is to be benefited, and that would in a great measure continue, were the countries as independent of each other as France and Spain; because the specious errors of those who speak without reflecting. And among the many which I have heard, the following seems the most general, viz. that had this rupture happened forty or fifty years hence, instead of now, the continent would have been more able to have shaken off the dependence. To which I reply, that our military ability, at this time, arises from the experience gained in the last war, and which in forty or fifty years' time, would be totally extinct. The continent would not, by that time, have a quitrent reserved thereon will always lessen, and in time will wholly support, the yearly expense of government. It matters not how long the debt is in paying, so that the lands when sold be applied to the discharge of it, and for the execution of which the Congress for the time being will be the continental trustees.

I proceed now to the second head, viz. Which is the easiest and most practicable plan, reconciliation or independence; with some occasional remarks.

He who takes nature for his guide, is not easily beaten out of his argument, and on that ground, I answer generally that independence being a single simple line, contained within ourselves; and reconciliation, a matter exceedingly perplexed and complicated, and in which a treacherous capricious court is to interfere, gives the answer without a doubt.

The present state of America is truly alarming to every man who is capable of reflection. Without law, without government, without any other mode of power than what is founded on, and granted by, courtesy. Held together by an unexampled occurrence of sentiment, which is nevertheless subject to change, and which every secret enemy is endeavoring to dissolve. Our present condition is, Legislation without law; wisdom without a plan; a constitution without a name; and, what is strangely astonishing, perfect independence contending for dependence. The instance is without a precedent, the case never existed before, and who can tell what may be the event? The property of no man is secure in the present un-braced system of things. The mind of the multitude is left at random, and seeing no fixed

object before them, they pursue such as fancy or opinion presents. Nothing is criminal; there is no such thing as treason, wherefore, every one thinks himself at liberty to act as he pleases. The Tories would not have dared to assemble offensively, had they known that their lives, by that act, were forfeited to the laws of the state. A line of distinction should be drawn between English soldiers taken in battle, and inhabitants of America taken in arms. The first are prisoners, but the latter traitors. The one forfeits his liberty, the other his head.

Notwithstanding our wisdom, there is a visible feebleness in some of our proceedings which gives encouragement to dissensions. The continental belt is too loosely buckled: And if something is not done in time, it will be too late to do any thing, and we shall fall into a state, in which neither reconciliation nor independence will be practicable. The king and his worthless adherents are got at their old game of dividing the continent, and there are not wanting among us printers who will be busy in spreading specious falsehoods. The artful and hypocritical letter which appeared a few months ago in two of the New York papers, and likewise in two others, is an evidence that there are men who want both judgment and honesty.

It is easy getting into holes and corners, and talking of reconciliation: But do such men seriously consider how difficult the task is, and how dangerous it may prove, should the continent divide thereon? Do they take within their view all the various orders of men whose situation and circumstances, as well as their own, are to be considered therein? Do they put themselves in the place of the sufferer whose all is already gone, and of the soldier, who hath quitted all for the defence of his country? If their ill-judged moderation be suited to their own private situations only, regardless of others, the event will convince them that "they are reckoning without their host."

Put us, say some, on the footing we were in the year 1763: To which I answer, the request is not now in the power of Britain to comply with, neither will she propose it; but if it were, and even should be granted, I ask, as a reasonable question, By what means is such a corrupt and faithless court to be kept to its engagements? Another parliament, nay, even the present, may hereafter repeal the obligation, on the pretence of its being violently obtained, or not wisely granted; and, in that case, Where is our

redress? No going to law with nations; cannon are the barristers of crowns; and the sword, not of justice, but of war, decides the suit. To be on the footing of 1763, it is not sufficient, that the laws only be put in the same state, but, that our circumstances likewise be put in the same state; our burnt and destroyed towns repaired or built up, our private losses made good, our public debts (contracted for defence) discharged; otherwise we shall be millions worse than we were at that enviable period. Such a request, had it been complied with a year ago, would have won the heart and soul of the continent, but now it is too late. "The Rubicon is passed." Besides, the taking up arms, merely to enforce the repeal of a pecuniary law, seems as unwarrantable by the divine law, and as repugnant to human feelings, as the taking up arms to enforce obedience thereto. The object, on either side, doth not justify the means; for the lives of men are too valuable to be cast away on such trifles. It is the violence which is done and threatened to our persons; the destruction of our property by an armed force; the invasion of our country by fire and sword, which conscientiously qualifies the use of arms: and the instant in which such mode of defence became necessary, all subjection to Britain ought to have ceased; and the independence of America should have been considered as dating its era from, and published by, the first musket that was fired against her. This line is a line of consistency; neither drawn by caprice, nor extended by ambition; but produced by a chain of events, of which the colonies were not the authors.

I shall conclude these remarks, with the following timely and well-intended hints. We ought to reflect, that there are three different ways by which an independency may hereafter be effected, and that one of those three, will, one day or other, be the fate of America, viz. By the legal voice of the people in Congress; by a military power, or by a mob: It may not always happen that our soldiers are citizens, and the multitude a body of reasonable men; virtue, as I have already remarked, is not hereditary, neither is it perpetual. Should an independency be brought about by the first of those means, we have every opportunity and every encouragement before us, to form the noblest, purest constitution on the face of the earth. We have it in our power to begin the world over again. A situation, similar to the present, hath not happened since the days of Noah until now.

The birthday of a new world is at hand, and a race of men, perhaps as numerous as all Europe contains, are to receive their portion of freedom from the events of a few months. The reflection is awful, and in this point of view, how trifling, how ridiculous, do the little paltry cavilings of a few weak or interested men appear, when weighed against the business of a world.

Should we neglect the present favorable and inviting period, and independence be hereafter effected by any other means, we must charge the consequence to ourselves, or to those rather whose narrow and prejudiced souls are habitually opposing the measure, without either inquiring or reflecting. There are reasons to be given in support of independence which men should rather privately think of, than be publicly told of. We ought not now to be debating whether we shall be independent or not, but anxious to accomplish it on a firm, secure, and honorable basis, and uneasy rather that it is not yet began upon. Every day convinces us of its necessity. Even the Tories (if such beings yet remain among us) should, of all men, be the most solicitous to promote it; for as the appointment of committees at first protected them from popular rage, so, a wise and well established form of government will be the only certain means of continuing it securely to them. Wherefore, if they have not virtue enough to be WHIGS, they ought to have prudence enough to wish for independence.

In short, independence is the only bond that tie and keep us together. We shall then see our object, and our ears will be legally shut against the schemes of an intriguing, as well as cruel, enemy. We shall then, too, be on a proper footing to treat with Britain; for there is reason to conclude, that the pride of that court will be less hurt by treating with the American States for terms of peace, than with those, whom she denominates "rebellious subjects," for terms of accommodation. It is our delaying in that, encourages her to hope for conquest, and our backwardness tends only to prolong the war. As we have, without any good effect therefrom, withheld our trade to obtain a redress of our grievances, let us now try the alternative, by independently redressing them ourselves, and then offering to open the trade. The mercantile and reasonable part of England, will be still with us; because, peace, with trade, is preferable to war without it. And if this offer be not accepted, other courts may be applied to.

On these grounds I rest the matter. And as no offer hath yet been made to refute the doctrine contained in the former editions of this pamphlet, it is a negative proof, that either the doctrine cannot be refuted, or, that the party in favor of it are too numerous to be opposed. WHEREFORE, instead of gazing at each other with suspicious or doubtful curiosity, let each of us hold out to his neighbor the hearty hand of friendship, and unite in drawing a line, which, like an act of oblivion, shall bury in forgetfulness every former dissension. Let the names of Whig and Tory be extinct; and let none other be heard among us, than those of a good citizen, an open and resolute friend, and a virtuous supporter of the RIGHTS of MANKIND, and of the FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES OF AMERICA.

The Curse of Alexander Hamilton

"The Curse of Alexander Hamilton" examines the historical evolution of the General Welfare Clause of the U.S. Constitution from the Constitutional Convention to the 1936 Supreme Court decision that fundamentally changed the role of government in the lives of the citizenry. Hamilton's view of the definition of the 'general welfare' along with competing views by other Founders and statesmen that followed will be examined in order to provide a historical picture of the intense debate that has been with us since the founding of the nation and still shapes economic policy today.

https://www.youtube.com/embed/b-poQ_22gcf

"The Curse of Alexander Hamilton | Jack
Chambless" by the Foundation for
Economic Education

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Jacksonian America and the Rise of the Democratic Man

Dr. Bradley Birzer of Hillsdale College discusses the American founding, the right of association, Friedrich Hayek, Alexis de Tocqueville, and the rise of the Democratic man.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/WOmsj0uuHno>

"Jacksonian America and the Rise of the Democratic Man | Dr. Bradley Birzer" by the Foundation for Economic Education

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Additional Reading

- *In Defense of Andrew Jackson* by Dr. Bradley Birzer: This riveting and fully human portrait of President Andrew Jackson places him within a living context of his time, fleshing out Jackson as a no-compromise warrior and eccentric politician forced to navigate a crucial moment in America's history, when questions of national identity, political authority, religious authority, and the efficacy of democracy were seeping into all aspects of American life. Using diaries, letters, and newspaper columns from Jackson's contemporaries—including John Quincy Adams, James Monroe, Henry C. Calhoun, Daniel Webster, and Alexis de Toqueville—Birzer gives readers a radically new and historically true perspective on Andrew Jackson, while also drawing powerful parallels between the anxieties of Jacksonian America and the anxieties of the "Hillbilly Elegy" voting bloc of today.

Andrew Jackson: The First Imperial President

Andrew Jackson frequently appears in top ten lists of great Presidents of the United States. Professor Amy Sturgis of Lenoir-Rhyne University questions whether this distinction is deserved.

https://www.youtube.com/embed/Yd12Wz6o_KI

"Andrew Jackson: The First Imperial President" by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description

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They Knew It Was Wrong: Moral and Legal Arguments Against the Trail of Tears

According to Professor Amy Sturgis of Lenoir-Rhyne University, the Trail of Tears shouldn't have happened. In this video, Professor Sturgis explains both the moral and legal arguments used to protest the forced removal of the Cherokee Nation to "Indian Territory" as well as why it's so important that we remember the Trail of Tears today.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/qalhDKLrWEQ>

"The Trail of Tears: They Knew It Was Wrong" by the Institute for Humane Studies

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Watch on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qalhDKLrWEQ>

Protest Against the Trail of Tears: A Letter by Ralph Waldo Emerson

In 1838, poet, essayist, and lecturer Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote a letter to President Martin Van Buren protesting the forced removal of the Cherokee Nation from its land in Georgia to modern-day Oklahoma. In this extended excerpt from his letter, read by Professor Amy Sturgis Lenoir-Rhyne University, Emerson demonstrates that people at the time were aware that the Trail of Tears was a grave injustice. Emerson's was only one of many voices protesting the government's treatment of the Cherokee people, but these protests fell on deaf ears. The Trail of Tears remains a blemish on U.S. History.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/W2VtHtTrkVA>

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Watch on YouTube

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Forgotten Rebellion: Black Seminoles and the Largest Slave Revolt in U.S. History

Professor Amy Sturgis of Lenoir-Rhyne University tells the story of John Horse and the Black Seminoles who created the largest haven in the U.S. South for runaway slaves, led the largest slave revolt in U.S. history, and secured the only emancipation of rebellious slaves prior to the U.S. Civil War.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/5E0j8xgxjTY>

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One Nation under Bigger Government: The Civil War

Bradley Birzer, Professor of History at Hillsdale College, discusses how the Civil War and Abraham Lincoln contributed to the rise of ideology, nationalism, and progressivism in the US.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/dnLlU7z96M>

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The Civil War" by the Foundation for
Economic Education

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The Silver Trumpet of Freedom: Black Emancipators and Entrepreneurs edited by Lawrence W. Reed

This collection of 17 essays on key figures in African American history emphasizes eternal principles that should be celebrated: principles such as fairness, equality before the law, personal integrity, courage, and speaking truth to power, wealth creation and entrepreneurship, treating your fellow citizens with love and respect. Those principles, and surely a few others as well, are the very foundations of a free society.

Get the Book

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Introduction

From the steps of the iconic Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. on August 28, 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. delivered a speech that ranks as one of the most unforgettable and inspirational addresses in American history.

As it does for so many others, this line of Dr. King's resonates with me more than anything else from that remarkable day:

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."

What a difference it would make in this troubled world if Dr. King's hope were to be fully achieved! Though we've made progress in this regard in many ways and places, we've regressed in others. We have much work to do.

I say this because too many people all over the world, America included, still focus on judging people by criteria other than character — and not just by skin color. It diminishes us as human beings when we do so, for character is ultimately more important than any other factor. It defines each of us. It's what we'll likely be remembered for more than anything else — and that's as it should be, because character results from our choices in life and not from some accident of nature.

Yet, every day you see people being judged by others according to their political views, their place of origin, their personal faith, the way they dress or wear their hair, their sexual orientation, the school they attended, or any number of other irrelevant, unavoidable or unrevealing criteria.

As I've written elsewhere (especially in my small book, *Are We Good Enough for Liberty?*), character is what decides almost everything in your life, from how you regard yourself to how you relate to others to whether or not you've added or subtracted from society as a whole by the time you're done on this earth. Why waste your life judging yourself or others by things that ultimately don't matter?

I think Dr. King would want Black History Month to be celebrated in ways that unite us rather than divide us. Though one race is the focus of the month, I believe he would want us to celebrate the best values and the highest character of those black men and women all people should be proud of. It's with that in mind that I've assembled this ebook anthology of 17 essays previously published by the Foundation for Economic Education.

This collection emphasizes eternal principles that should be celebrated in all months of the year, not only February: principles such as fairness, equality before the law, personal integrity, courage, and speaking truth to power, wealth creation and entrepreneurship, treating your fellow citizens with love and respect. Those principles, and surely a few others as well, are the very foundations of a free society.

Some of the chapters in this ebook convey these principles through the inspirational stories of black lives in American history; other chapters explain them by illuminating how free markets, private property, and responsible citizenship encourage solid, positive character. It is my hope

that this book will encourage all men and women of good faith to put character first, just as Dr. King urged us to do decades ago.

The Civil Rights Movement: There's No Equality without Enforced Rights
Professor Fabio Rojas of Indiana University Bloomington explains that while African-Americans had many equal constitutional rights by 1866, they did not have equal procedural protections under law. The Civil Rights Movement pushed to get those rights enforced.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/7AFsauGjKds>

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The Myth of Equality in the 1950s

Professor Brian Domitrovic of Sam Houston State University questions whether the 1950s was in fact a period of economic equality, especially for African Americans.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/wLl9wOivHdc>

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How Did They Survive the Oregon Trail?

How did more than 300,000 people avoid bloodshed and chaos when they crossed the American plains between 1840 and 1860? Trappers used to say there was no law west of Leavenworth, Kansas. According to P.J. Hill of Wheaton College, pioneers governed themselves by signing contracts that worked like voluntary constitutions. The contracts anticipated disputes among the various groups of travelers and laid out how to resolve them.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/XhrgPGQTF5A>

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Discussion Questions

Prof. Hill talks about the Oregon Trail and how communities agreed on contracts, without government intervention. Do you think there are situations where the government should be involved in contracts? If so, under what circumstances? Why?

We Demand Freedom: Popular Movements for Liberty in U.S. History
According to Dr. Stephen Davies, the tea party movement in the United States was not an isolated occurrence in American history. Rather, it was part of a recurring movement in American history that ebbs and flows. These movements are peculiar, however, as they are unique to the United States. Dr. Davies offers several ideas as to why these movements exist in America.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/tYLUXxOW- M>

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How Mercantilism Started the American Revolution

In colonial America, trade was governed by mercantilist policies. But what was mercantilism? In this video, Professor Brian Domitrovich of Sam Houston State University defines mercantilism and explains how mercantilist policies imposed by the British Empire drove the colonists to declare independence.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/aWxvfkFbKy0>

"US Economic History 1 — How Mercantilism Started the American Revolution" by the Institute for Humane Studies

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Watch on YouTube

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Interstate Commerce & the Constitution

In the years following the American Revolution, trade disputes and tariffs between states threatened to break apart the newly founded United States. In this video, Professor Brian Domitrovich of Sam Houston State University explains how these disputes led the founders to replace the Articles of Confederation with the Constitution.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/vDG3-hBxbNk>

"US Economic History 2 — Interstate Commerce & the Constitution" by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description

In the years following the American Revolution, trade disputes and tariffs between states threatened to break apart the newly founded United States. Professor Brian Domitrovich of Sam Houston State University explains how these disputes led the founders to replace the Articles of Confederation with the Constitution.

Watch on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vDG3-hBxbNk>

The Rise and Fall of the National Bank

Does the United States need a national bank? This question was at the heart of one of the most notable political battles in the early United States. In this video, Professor Brian Domitrovich of Sam Houston State University explains the history of the national bank and explains why even today economists debate whether there is a need for a national bank.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/fX-5ivox9ZE>

"US Economic History 3 — National Banks' Rise and Fall" by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description

Does the United States need a national bank? This question was at the heart of one of the most notable political battles in the early United States. Professor Brian Domitrovich of Sam Houston State University explains the history of the national bank and explains why even today economists debate whether there is a need for a national bank.

Watch on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fX-5ivox9ZE>

Economic Causes of the Civil War

While slavery was the dominant issue that led to the Civil War, economic policies also created tension between the North and the South. In this video, Professor Brian Domitrovich of Sam Houston State University explains how tariffs and the American System, a federal infrastructure plan, contributed to the growing animosity between the North and South.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/cTCCIj8tOSI>

"US Economic History 4 — Economic Causes of the Civil War" by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description

While slavery was the dominant issue that led to the Civil War, economic policies also created tension between the North and the South. Professor Brian Domitrovich of Sam Houston State University explains how tariffs and the American System, a federal infrastructure plan, contributed to the growing animosity between the North and South.

Watch on Youtube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cTCCIj8tOSI>

The Gilded Age, Robber Barons, and the Rise of Big Business

In the 1870s and 1880s, the US economy grew faster than ever before and quickly became the largest economy in the world. In this video, Professor Brian Domitrovich of Sam Houston State University explains how big business owners, known as robber barons, immigration, and the engineering revolution all contributed to this incredible economic growth.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/iPLZyoVxUI4>

"Economic Growth in the Gilded Age —
US Economic History 5" by the Institute
for Humane Studies

Description

In the 1870s and 1880s, the US economy grew faster than ever before and quickly became the largest economy in the world. Professor Brian Domitrovich of Sam Houston State University explains how big business owners, known as robber barons, immigration, and the engineering revolution all contributed to this incredible economic growth.

Watch on Youtube

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The Myth of the Robber Barons

Professor Burt Folsom of Hillsdale College tells the story of Edward K. Collins, Cornelius Vanderbilt, and the steamship industry to illustrate the difference between political and market entrepreneurs.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/4Vw6uF2LdZw>

"The Myth of the Robber Barons with Burt Folsom" by the Foundation for Economic Education

Description

Professor Burt Folsom of Hillsdale College tells the story of Edward K. Collins, Cornelius Vanderbilt, and the steamship industry to illustrate the difference between political and market entrepreneurs.

Additional Reading

- *The Myth of the Robber Barons: A New Look at the Rise of Big Business in America* by Burt Folsom: This book describes the role of key entrepreneurs in the economic growth of the United States from 1850 to 1910. The entrepreneurs studied are Cornelius Vanderbilt, John D. Rockefeller, James J. Hill, Andrew Mellon, Charles Schwab, and the Scranton family. Most historians argue that these men, and others like them, were Robber Barons. The story, however, is more complicated. The author, Burton Folsom, divides the entrepreneurs into two groups market entrepreneurs and political entrepreneurs.

Grover Cleveland

Lawrence Reed, president of the Foundation for Economic Education, explains why Grover Cleveland is his favorite president and makes the case why he should be considered one of the best presidents in American history

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/VkPeGRmnkjs>

"Grover Cleveland with Lawrence Reed"

by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description

Lawrence Reed, president of the Foundation for Economic Education, explains why Grover Cleveland is his favorite president and makes the case why he should be considered one of the best presidents in American history

The Panic of 1893

Lawrence R. Reed, president of the Foundation of Economic Education, discusses the history of monetary policy in the US and how it led to the panic of 1893.

https://www.youtube.com/embed/Qu_b6N-G1Os

"The Panic of 1893 with Lawrence Reed"
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Description

Lawrence R. Reed, president of the Foundation of Economic Education, discusses the history of monetary policy in the US and how it led to the panic of 1893.

Progressivism and the New Deal

Between the 1890s and 1930s, the Progressive and New Deal reformers urged the government to regulate the economy more heavily in order to make it more efficient and equitable. In this video, Professor Brian Domitrovich of Sam Houston State University explains the economic policies these reformers ushered in, such as the Clayton Antitrust Act of 1914, the New Deal, and the establishment of the Federal Reserve.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/BYUMdC7CDJ0>

"Progressivism & the New Deal — US Economic History 6" by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description

Between the 1890s and 1930s, the Progressive and New Deal reformers urged the government to regulate the economy more heavily in order to make it more efficient and equitable. Professor Brian Domitrovich of Sam Houston State University explains the economic policies these reformers ushered in, such as the Clayton Antitrust Act of 1914, the New Deal, and the establishment of the Federal Reserve.

Watch on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BYUMdC7CDJ0>

The Causes and Repercussions of the Great Depression

Between 1929 and 1940, the United States faced the worst economic crisis in its history, the Great Depression. In this video, Professor Brian Domitrovich of Sam Houston State University explains different theories about what caused the Depression and how successful the government's response to the crisis was.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/JMSO8Yhnktw>

"The Great Depression: Causes & Repercussions — US Economic History 7"
by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description

Between 1929 and 1940, the United States faced the worst economic crisis in its history, the Great Depression. Professor Brian Domitrovich of Sam Houston State University explains different theories about what caused the Depression and how successful the government's response to the crisis was.

Watch on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JMSO8Yhnktw>

Great Myths of the Great Depression

Students today are often given a skewed account of the Great Depression of 1929-1941 that condemns free-market capitalism as the cause of, and promotes government intervention as the solution to, the economic hardships of the era. In this essay based on a popular lecture, Foundation for Economic Education (FEE) President Lawrence W. Reed debunks this conventional view and traces the central role that poor government policy played in fostering this legendary catastrophe.

Get the Book

- [Great Myths of the Great Depression \(PDF\)](#)
- [Great Myths of the Great Depression \(MOBI\)](#)
- [Great Myths of the Great Depression \(ePub\)](#)
- [Great Myths of the Great Depression \(MP3\)](#)
- [Great Myths of the Great Depression \(Buy a hard copy.\)](#)

Introduction

Many volumes have been written about the Great Depression and its impact on the lives of millions of Americans. Historians, economists, and politicians have all combed the wreckage searching for the “black box” that will reveal the cause of this legendary tragedy. Sadly, all too many of them decide to abandon their search, finding it easier perhaps to circulate a host of false and harmful conclusions about the events that caused the Great Depression seven decades ago.

How bad was the Great Depression? Over the four years from 1929 to 1933, production at the nation’s factories, mines, and utilities fell by more than half. People’s real disposable incomes dropped 28 percent. Stock prices collapsed to one-tenth of their pre-crash height. The number of unemployed Americans rose from 1.6 million in 1929 to 12.8 million in 1933. One of every four workers was out of a job at the Depression’s nadir, and ugly rumors of revolt simmered for the first time since the Civil War.

Old myths never die; they just keep showing up in college economics and political science textbooks. Students today are frequently taught that

unfettered free enterprise collapsed of its own weight in 1929, paving the way for a decade-long economic depression full of hardship and misery. President Herbert Hoover is presented as an advocate of “hands-off,” or laissez-faire, economic policy, while his successor, Franklin Roosevelt, is the economic savior whose policies brought us recovery. This popular account of the Depression belongs in a book of fairy tales and not in a serious discussion of economic history, as a review of the facts demonstrates.

The Great, Great, Great, Great Depression

To properly understand the events of the time, it is appropriate to view the Great Depression as not one, but four consecutive depressions rolled into one. Professor Hans Sennholz has labeled these four “phases” as follows: the business cycle; the disintegration of the world economy; the New Deal; and the Wagner Act.^[1]

The first phase explains why the crash of 1929 happened in the first place; the other three show how government intervention kept the economy in a stupor for over a decade.

Phase I: The Business Cycle

The Great Depression was not the country’s first depression, though it proved to be the longest. The common thread woven through the several earlier debacles was disastrous manipulation of the money supply by government. For various reasons, government policies were adopted that ballooned the quantity of money and credit. A boom resulted, followed later by a painful day of reckoning. None of America’s depressions prior to 1929, however, lasted more than four years and most of them were over in two. The Great Depression lasted for a dozen years because the government compounded its monetary errors with a series of harmful interventions.

Most monetary economists, particularly those of the “Austrian school,” have observed the close relationship between money supply and economic activity. When government inflates the money and credit supply, interest rates at first fall. Businesses invest this “easy money” in new production

projects and a boom takes place in capital goods. As the boom matures, business costs rise, interest rates readjust upward, and profits are squeezed. The easy-money effects thus wear off and the monetary authorities, fearing price inflation, slow the growth of or even contract the money supply. In either case, the manipulation is enough to knock out the shaky supports from underneath the economic house of cards.

One of the most thorough and meticulously documented accounts of the Fed's inflationary actions prior to 1929 is *America's Great Depression* by the late Murray Rothbard. Using a broad measure that includes currency, demand and time deposits, and other ingredients, Rothbard estimated that the Federal Reserve expanded the money supply by more than 60 percent from mid-1921 to mid-1929.^[2] The flood of easy money drove interest rates down, pushed the stock market to dizzy heights, and gave birth to the "Roaring Twenties."

By early 1929, the Federal Reserve was taking the punch away from the party. It choked off the money supply, raised interest rates, and for the next three years presided over a money supply that shrank by 30 percent. This deflation following the inflation wrenches the economy from tremendous boom to colossal bust.

The "smart" money—the Bernard Baruchs and the Joseph Kennedys who watched things like money supply—saw that the party was coming to an end before most other Americans did. Baruch actually began selling stocks and buying bonds and gold as early as 1928; Kennedy did likewise, commenting, "only a fool holds out for the top dollar."^[3]

When the masses of investors eventually sensed the change in Fed policy, the stampede was underway. The stock market, after nearly two months of moderate decline, plunged on "Black Thursday"—October 24, 1929—as the pessimistic view of large and knowledgeable investors spread.

The stock market crash was only a symptom—not the cause—of the Great Depression: the market rose and fell in near synchronization with what the Fed was doing.

Phase II: Disintegration of the World Economy

If this crash had been like previous ones, the subsequent hard times might have ended in a year or two. But unprecedented political bungling instead prolonged the misery for twelve long years.

Unemployment in 1930 averaged a mildly recessionary 8.9 percent, up from 3.2 percent in 1929. It shot up rapidly until peaking out at more than 25 percent in 1933. Until March 1933, these were the years of President Herbert Hoover—the man that anti-capitalists depict as a champion of noninterventionist, laissez-faire economics.

Did Hoover really subscribe to a “hands off the economy,” free-market philosophy? His opponent in the 1932 election, Franklin Roosevelt, didn’t think so. During the campaign, Roosevelt blasted Hoover for spending and taxing too much, boosting the national debt, choking off trade, and putting millions of people on the dole. He accused the president of “reckless and extravagant” spending, of thinking “that we ought to center control of everything in Washington as rapidly as possible,” and of presiding over “the greatest spending administration in peacetime in all of history.” Roosevelt’s running mate, John Nance Garner, charged that Hoover was “leading the country down the path of socialism.”^[4] Contrary to the modern myth about Hoover, Roosevelt and Garner were absolutely right.

The crowning folly of the Hoover administration was the Smoot-Hawley Tariff, passed in June 1930. It came on top of the Fordney-McCumber Tariff of 1922, which had already put American agriculture in a tailspin during the preceding decade. The most protectionist legislation in U.S. history, Smoot-Hawley virtually closed the borders to foreign goods and ignited a vicious international trade war. Professor Barry Poulson notes that not only were 887 tariffs sharply increased, but the act broadened the list of dutiable commodities to 3,218 items as well.^[5]

Officials in the administration and in Congress believed that raising trade barriers would force Americans to buy more goods made at home, which would solve the nagging unemployment problem. They ignored an important principle of international commerce: trade is ultimately a two-

way street; if foreigners cannot sell their goods here, then they cannot earn the dollars they need to buy here.

Foreign companies and their workers were flattened by Smoot-Hawley's steep tariff rates, and foreign governments soon retaliated with trade barriers of their own. With their ability to sell in the American market severely hampered, they curtailed their purchases of American goods. American agriculture was particularly hard hit. With a stroke of the presidential pen, farmers in this country lost nearly a third of their markets. Farm prices plummeted and tens of thousands of farmers went bankrupt. With the collapse of agriculture, rural banks failed in record numbers, dragging down hundreds of thousands of their customers.

Hoover dramatically increased government spending for subsidy and relief schemes. In the space of one year alone, from 1930 to 1931, the federal government's share of GNP increased by about one-third.

Hoover's agricultural bureaucracy doled out hundreds of millions of dollars to wheat and cotton farmers even as the new tariffs wiped out their markets. His Reconstruction Finance Corporation ladled out billions more in business subsidies. Commenting decades later on Hoover's administration, Rexford Guy Tugwell, one of the architects of Franklin Roosevelt's policies of the 1930s, explained, "We didn't admit it at the time, but practically the whole New Deal was extrapolated from programs that Hoover started." [6]

To compound the folly of high tariffs and huge subsidies, Congress then passed and Hoover signed the Revenue Act of 1932. It doubled the income tax for most Americans; the top bracket more than doubled, going from 24 percent to 63 percent. Exemptions were lowered; the earned income credit was abolished; corporate and estate taxes were raised; new gift, gasoline, and auto taxes were imposed; and postal rates were sharply hiked.

Can any serious scholar observe the Hoover administration's massive economic intervention and, with a straight face, pronounce the inevitably deleterious effects as the fault of free markets?

Phase III: The New Deal

Franklin Delano Roosevelt won the 1932 presidential election in a landslide, collecting 472 electoral votes to just 59 for the incumbent Herbert Hoover. The platform of the Democratic Party whose ticket Roosevelt headed declared, “We believe that a party platform is a covenant with the people to be faithfully kept by the party entrusted with power.” It called for a 25 percent reduction in federal spending, a balanced federal budget, a sound gold currency “to be preserved at all hazards,” the removal of government from areas that belonged more appropriately to private enterprise, and an end to the “extravagance” of Hoover’s farm programs. This is what candidate Roosevelt promised, but it bears no resemblance to what President Roosevelt actually delivered.

In the first year of the New Deal, Roosevelt proposed spending \$10 billion while revenues were only \$3 billion. Between 1933 and 1936, government expenditures rose by more than 83 percent. Federal debt skyrocketed by 73 percent.

Roosevelt secured passage of the Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA), which levied a new tax on agricultural processors and used the revenue to supervise the wholesale destruction of valuable crops and cattle. Federal agents oversaw the ugly spectacle of perfectly good fields of cotton, wheat, and corn being plowed under. Healthy cattle, sheep, and pigs by the millions were slaughtered and buried in mass graves.

Even if the AAA had helped farmers by curtailing supplies and raising prices, it could have done so only by hurting millions of others who had to pay those prices or make do with less to eat.

Perhaps the most radical aspect of the New Deal was the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA), passed in June 1933, which set up the National Recovery Administration (NRA). Under the NIRA, most manufacturing industries were suddenly forced into government-mandated cartels. Codes that regulated prices and terms of sale briefly transformed much of the American economy into a fascist-style arrangement, while the NRA was financed by new taxes on the very industries it controlled. Some economists have estimated that the NRA boosted the cost of doing business by an average of 40 percent—not something a depressed economy needed for recovery.

Like Hoover before him, Roosevelt signed into law steep income tax rate increases for the high brackets and introduced a 5 percent withholding tax on corporate dividends. In fact, tax hikes became a favorite policy of the president's for the next ten years, culminating in a top income tax rate of 94 percent during the last year of World War II. His alphabet agency commissars spent the public's tax money like it was so much bilge.

For example, Roosevelt's public relief programs hired actors to give free shows and librarians to catalogue archives. The New Deal even paid researchers to study the history of the safety pin, hired 100 Washington workers to patrol the streets with balloons to frighten starlings away from public buildings, and put men on the public payroll to chase tumbleweeds on windy days.

Roosevelt created the Civil Works Administration in November 1933 and ended it in March 1934, though the unfinished projects were transferred to the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. Roosevelt had assured Congress in his State of the Union message that any new such program would be abolished within a year. "The federal government," said the President, "must and shall quit this business of relief. I am not willing that the vitality of our people be further stopped by the giving of cash, of market baskets, of a few bits of weekly work cutting grass, raking leaves, or picking up papers in the public parks."

But in 1935 the Works Progress Administration came along. It is known today as the very government program that gave rise to the new term, "boondoggle," because it "produced" a lot more than the 77,000 bridges and 116,000 buildings to which its advocates loved to point as evidence of its efficacy.^[7] The stupefying roster of wasteful spending generated by these jobs programs represented a diversion of valuable resources to politically motivated and economically counterproductive purposes.

The American economy was soon relieved of the burden of some of the New Deal's excesses when the Supreme Court outlawed the NRA in 1935 and the AAA in 1936, earning Roosevelt's eternal wrath and derision. Recognizing much of what Roosevelt did as unconstitutional, the "nine old men" of the Court also threw out other, more minor acts and programs which hindered recovery.

Freed from the worst of the New Deal, the economy showed some signs of life. Unemployment dropped to 18 percent in 1935, 14 percent in 1936, and even lower in 1937. But by 1938, it was back up to 20 percent as the economy slumped again. The stock market crashed nearly 50 percent between August 1937 and March 1938. The “economic stimulus” of Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal had achieved a real “first”: a depression within a depression!

Phase IV: The Wagner Act

The stage was set for the 1937–38 collapse with the passage of the National Labor Relations Act in 1935—better known as the Wagner Act and organized labor’s “Magna Carta.” To quote Hans Sennholz again:

"This law revolutionized American labor relations. It took labor disputes out of the courts of law and brought them under a newly created Federal agency, the National Labor Relations Board, which became prosecutor, judge, and jury, all in one. Labor union sympathizers on the Board further perverted this law, which already afforded legal immunities and privileges to labor unions. The U.S. thereby abandoned a great achievement of Western civilization, equality under the law." [8]

Armed with these sweeping new powers, labor unions went on a militant organizing frenzy. Threats, boycotts, strikes, seizures of plants, and widespread violence pushed productivity down sharply and unemployment up dramatically. Membership in the nation’s labor unions soared; by 1941 there were two and a half times as many Americans in unions as in 1935.

From the White House on the heels of the Wagner Act came a thunderous barrage of insults against business. Businessmen, Roosevelt fumed, were obstacles on the road to recovery. New strictures on the stock market were imposed. A tax on corporate retained earnings, called the “undistributed profits tax,” was levied. “These soak-the-rich efforts,” writes economist Robert Higgs, “left little doubt that the president and his administration intended to push through Congress everything they could to extract wealth

from the high-income earners responsible for making the bulk of the nation’s decisions about private investment.” [9]

Higgs draws a close connection between the level of private investment and the course of the American economy in the 1930s. The relentless assaults of the Roosevelt administration—in both word and deed—against business, property, and free enterprise guaranteed that the capital needed to jumpstart the economy was either taxed away or forced into hiding. When Roosevelt took America to war in 1941, he eased up on his antibusiness agenda, but a great deal of the nation’s capital was diverted into the war effort instead of into plant expansion or consumer goods. Not until both Roosevelt and the war were gone did investors feel confident enough to “set in motion the postwar investment boom that powered the economy’s return to sustained prosperity.” [10]

Whither Free Enterprise?

On the eve of America’s entry into World War II and twelve years after the stock market crash of Black Thursday, ten million Americans were jobless. Roosevelt had pledged in 1932 to end the crisis, but it persisted two presidential terms and countless interventions later.

Along with the horror of World War II came a revival of trade with America’s allies. The war’s destruction of people and resources did not help the U.S. economy, but this renewed trade did. More important, the Truman administration that followed Roosevelt was decidedly less eager to berate and bludgeon private investors, and as a result, those investors came back into the economy to fuel a powerful postwar boom.

The genesis of the Great Depression lay in the inflationary monetary policies of the U.S. government in the 1920s. It was prolonged and exacerbated by a litany of political missteps: trade-crushing tariffs, incentive-sapping taxes, mind-numbing controls on production and competition, senseless destruction of crops and cattle, and coercive labor laws, to recount just a few. It was not the free market that produced twelve years of agony; rather, it was political bungling on a scale as grand as there ever was.

Notes

1. Hans F. Sennholz, “The Great Depression,” *The Freeman*, April 1975, p. 205.
2. Murray Rothbard, *America’s Great Depression* (Kansas City: Sheed and Ward, Inc., 1975), p. 89.
3. Lindley H. Clark, Jr., “After the Fall,” *Wall Street Journal*, October 26, 1979, p. 18.
4. “FDR’s Disputed Legacy,” *Time*, February 1, 1982, p. 23.
5. Barry W. Poulson, *Economic History of the United States* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1981), p. 508.
6. Paul Johnson, *A History of the American People* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1997), p. 741.
7. Martin Morse Wooster, “Bring Back the WPA? It Also Had A Seamy Side,” *Wall Street Journal*, September 3, 1986, p. A26.
8. Sennholz, pp. 212–13.
9. Robert Higgs, “Regime Uncertainty: Why the Great Depression Lasted So Long and Why Prosperity Resumed After the War,” *The Independent Review*, Spring 1997, p. 573.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 564.

The Post WWII Boom

Unlike the many war ravaged countries around the world in 1945, American cities and industries were intact after WWII, and the United States became the sole powerhouse of the global economy. In this video, Professor Brian Domitrovich of Sam Houston State University explains how the United States transitioned to a consumer economy from the 1940s through 1960s.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/Ic5InvM8yQM>

"Post-WWII Boom: Transition to a Consumer Economy — US Economic History 8" by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description

Unlike the many war ravaged countries around the world in 1945, American cities and industries were intact after WWII, and the United States became the sole powerhouse of the global economy. Professor Brian Domitrovich of Sam Houston State University explains how the United States transitioned to a consumer economy from the 1940s through 1960s.

Watch on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ic5InvM8yQM>

America's Transition to a Global Economy

Since WWII, the United States has become an increasingly global economy. In this video, Professor Brian Domitrovich of Sam Houston State University explains how policies like the Marshall Plan and NAFTA helped transition the US to a global economy and the struggles it has faced.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/dJYWDZa8cr4>

"America's Transition to a Global Economy

(1960s-1990s) — US Economic History 9"

by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description

Since WWII, the United States has become an increasingly global economy. Professor Brian Domitrovich of Sam Houston State University explains how policies like the Marshall Plan and NAFTA helped transition the US to a global economy and the struggles it has faced.

Watch on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dJYWDZa8cr4>